THE ADHYATMA RAMAYANA

Discourses

by

Swami Akhandananda Saraswati

INDEX

CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION ……	2
SUPPLIMENT ……	26
BAAL KANDA ……	30
AYODHYA KANDA ……	189
ARANYA KANDA ……	355
KISHKINDHA KANDA ……	495
SUNDAR KANDA ……	622
YUDHA KANDA ……	692
UTTAR KANDA ……	951
GLOSSARY ……	1149

Adhyatma Ramayana

By

Swami Akhandananda Saraswati

Introduction: Basic Feeling.

The 'Valmiki Ramayana' is charitra-pradhan, dominated by the behavior and life of Shri Rama. In it, the Sat of the Sacchidananda is given predominance. Bhagwan Rama is Sat-swarup. His bhava and His stuti pervade the entire granth. Being presented from this drishti, the Valmiki Ramayana focuses on the Sat - the pure existence and authority of Bhagwan Shri Rama. The 'Yoga Vasishtha' is Gnan-pradhan. The Chit part of the Sacchidananda is predominant in his granth. The 'Anand Ramayana' presents the anand-pradhan aspect of Bhagwan Sacchidananda Rama. These three Ramayanas are written by Muni Valmiki.

The 'Adhyatma Ramayana' is written by Vyasaji. In the sequence of the granths, the Ramayana of Valmiki is given first and the Puranas by Vyasaji later. Even in the Mahabharata Vyasaji has described Valmikiji and his adi-kavya, the first Ramayana. He has given the succinct essence of all three in his 'Brahmanda Purana'. In the 'Adhyatma Ramayana' Bhagwan's Sat-Chit-Anand (Sacchidananda) aspects fill every episode of this great granth. *'Krishnaastu pragnaanaghana e`va'* Bhagwan is completely saturated with the Sat, Chit and Anand in every way.

The Mahatmya of the 'Adhyatma Ramayana'.

Shri Sutaji was describing the greatness of this granth to Shaunak and other Munis, sitting in the Naimisharanya. Naradji is the Acharya of the Bhakti-marg. It was he who gave Valmiki the upadesh of the Ramayana. If he has any ichha at all, it is to induce people to get involved in Bhagwan's bhakti. This is why Naradji always keeps moving around. One day, he came to the Satya loka.

'Satya loka' means the realm of the Satya-guna. The antahkarana is created in the Sattvaguna. Brahmaji reigns in the realm called the realm called the 'Satya loka', where the Vedas manifest in human form and surround him. A radiance, like the sun at sunrise, is emitted from Brahmaji's shareer. Markandeya and other Munis do Brahmaji's stuti. He sits on his throne with Saraswati beside him.

Brahmaji has to do the work of creating this world. He is the samashti antahkarana - meaning, the collective mana, buddhi, chitta and ahankara of all the beings in creation. The antahkarana is the fourfold mind, with four aspects, and Brahmaji has four heads which are the four Vedas. Vivek is needed for creating this srishti, so Brahmaji uses a hansa as his vehicle. Vidya is needed for creating this srishti and so Brahmaji keeps Saraswati with him.

Brahmaji is Bhagwan's mana, which creates this whole world. Naradji went to Brahmaji - who is his father - and bowed to him respectfully. He did Brahmaji's stuti. Brahmaji was pleased with his son's behavior. The secret of successful vyavhar is that if we want to ask for something from someone, we will get a better response if that person is pleased with us. If he is not pleased with us, he won't be eager to explain every intricate detail in full.

There is another factor in this - generous intellectuals are not miserly in giving Gnan. They explain everything in depth regardless of the capacity of the questioner to understand the knowledge being given. However, if he is pleased with the person who asks, he will take greater care to make everything perfectly clear.

Pleased with Naradji, Brahmaji asked, 'Naradji, what is the reason for your coming? What do you want to know?'

Naradji said, 'you have already explained everything else to me. I have come today to ask about an incidental matter. This is the Kali Yuga. All the activities of the manushya are for getting sukha. People do punya in the Kali Yuga but they want to be sukhi. They have no respect for honesty and truthfulness; they indulge in dishonesty and lies. They put the blame on other people and hide their own faults. They want to usurp the wealth of other people, have asakti for other men's wives, and cause dukha for others. They consider their shareer to be their all-in-all. They have lost their way in this sansara because they are nastik. Their behavior is lowly, like animals. They rebel against their mother and father.

This manushya does not know that true sukha dwells in their hriday, not in the objects of the outside world. The more limpid and pure his heart, the more sukhi he will be. His mano-vritti is sukha-akara. A sukha-akara vritti rises in the mana

of a person who does punya. Those who don't do punya may possess immense wealth, but they are seldom sukhi. There is no connection between wealth and sukha. Wealthy people may have everything people feel is necessary for happiness - a big family, every worldly comfort, a good position etc, but it is seen that they are generally dukhi.

A sharp cry of pain pierces their hriday while their mano-vrittis ripple with pleasure. Wealth and sukha are not synonyms. Those who have the bhram that rich people are happy face much trouble. In general, wealthy people are very seldom happy people. They have wine, women, luxuries, and every possible comfort, but there is scant sukha in their hriday.

Our country, Bharat, is Dharma-pradhan; it is dominated by Dharma. In a Dharma-pradhan desha, the people revere their mother and father. In a bhoga-pradhan place, people revere the giver of bhoga.

(*De`haatmadrishtayo moodha naastikaah pashubuddhayah,*

Maatripitrikuladve`shaah streede`vaah kaamakinkaraah.

Adhyatma Ramayana Mahatmya 11)

Brahmins sell the Vedas out of greed, to earn their livelihood. The purpose of their learning is monetary gain, not to obtain Gnan. The manushya has become blind with intoxication, measuring success with the amount of cheating he can do successfully. People of all the Varnas cross over the boundaries of what is right and proper for them to do. This results in anarchy and social disorder. Men and women no longer adhere to the sanctity of marriage; they insult and disdain their spouses without hesitation.'

I am reminded of a story from another Ramayana, which contains a subtle message. It is a beautiful assertion of Sitaji's sat-charitra. One day, Shri Sita-Ramachandra were seated in the durbar when a lavish gift was brought in. There were basketfuls of diamonds, pearls, fruits and flowers. Shri Rama had the baskets sent to their rooms.

Later, Sitaji began to look to see what gifts had been sent. She saw a beautiful lotus flower in the basket of flowers. This exquisite lotus had a divine fragrance. Sitaji was tempted to breathe in this wonderful scent. She kept picking up the

flower, smelling it, and putting it back into the basket. A little later Shri Rama came into the chamber. Sitaji opened the basket of flowers and showed Him the flower. She did not mention that she had already opened the basket and smelled the flowers before He came. Shri Rama understood that Sitaji had deliberately avoided telling this to Him.

The thought came to Shri Ramachandra that if other women come to know that a pativrata like Sitaji also hides things from her husband, they will begin to deceive their husbands. By chance it was the dvadashi - the twelfth day of the lunar calendar. Sitaji had gone into the garden to bring tulsi leaves when she remembered. She turned back without plucking any leaves, but her sari got caught in a twig and one leaf broke and fell to the ground. Sitaji was distressed. She lamented and confessed to Shri Rama about her not telling Him that she had smelled the lotus before offering it to Him.

Shri Rama said, 'I don't know any method by which the leaf can be joined to the shrub again, but Naradji is sure to know. He will tell you when he comes.' Naradji came, and the matter was put to him. 'There is no difficulty in this,' he said. 'Any pativrata can take the leaf in her hand and touch it to the twig, and it will get attached.'

'I am a pativrata,' said Sitaji. 'I will attach the leaf.' She held the leaf in a way that it touched the twig from where it had fallen, but the leaf did not get attached. Many people were watching with great interest. Some of them began to smile, thinking that there must be some lapse in Sitaji's total dedication to Rama. Sitaji was shocked. 'I have done no paapa knowingly,' she thought.

Naradji said, 'all right; I will do dhyana to see why the leaf didn't get attached.' He sat in dhyana for some time. Then he said, 'Sitaji smelled a flower repeatedly before offering it to Shri Rama. This has become a dosha in her pativratya.'

Sitaji said, 'yes, that is true. I did make that mistake. What should I do now?' Naradji made her do a prayashchitta. Then he told her, 'attach the leaf now.' Sitaji obeyed and the leaf got attached.

This episode is given to show Sitaji's pativrata-Dharma. Apart from this single nominal lapse there was no lapse in her Dharma as a devoted wife in her entire jeevan.

This pativrata Dharma did not stay in the Kali Yuga. Women disdain their husbands, and this destroys their pativratya. The pavitrata of the charitra is the greatest thing in jeevan.

Naradji asked Brahmaji, 'even the relationship of a son with his mother and father becomes dushit. The son rebels against them. The Shastras say that for a son, his mother and father are what a Guru is to his shishya; they are to be revered. People behave in a way that is inappropriate instead of having shraddha and respect for their parents. Their buddhi is dushit. How will they get auspicious paraloka? Please do kripa and tell me of a method for this.'

Brahmaji said, 'Beta, you have asked a very good question. The desire to know the Rama-Tattva is in your mana. I will describe it to you. Parvatiji had asked a similar question to Shankarji. Shankarji told her, "all the paapa-tapa of a manushya are destroyed by reciting, or listening to the Adhyatma Ramayana."

Paapa is in the form of karma and tapa is in the form of its fruit. A manushya has to suffer the fruit of his action without fail. A person who understands the rahasya of the Adhyatma Ramayana and gives it a place in his interaction all his life will be saved from the doshas of the Kali Yuga. He will obtain all the fruits. This will be his bhakti. He will never suffer. All the sukhas of this sansara will be easy for him to obtain.'

There are two episodes in the 'Adhyatma Ramayana', both important. One is the 'Ram hriday' and the other is 'Ramagita'. If a person understands the rahasya of either of these, he can grasp the rahasya of the Upanishads, because both episodes are filled with the quintessence of the Upanishads. There is a great parampara of this 'Adhyatma Ramayana'. Many Mahapurushas have narrated it and listened to it. Combined, they are not equal to even a small portion, because of the gravity of the essence of its Gnan

Since it is given in the form of a conversation between Shiva and Parwati every shloka of the 'Adhyatma Ramayana' is the form of a mantra, and so, the smaran of Rama is done first of all.

Raamam vishvamayam vande` raamam vande` raghudvaham,

raamam vipravaram vande` raamam shyaamaagrajam bhaje`.

Ram hriday: The chinmaya, advay Parabrahm takes an Avatar for the samsiddhi of those who do His upasana.

In brief, a majhab that does not have the Darshan Shastras is made of only stories and episodes. There are great majhabs that are famous in this world, but there is a difference between their principles and the principle of the Vedas.

These majhabs believe in the Ishwara, but they believe that He stays in the seventh Heaven, far from the world He has created, that He is nirakara, He is never sakara.

The Vedic principle is that the Ishwara is the potter as well as the clay, the substance of which this world is made. When the one who makes, and that which is made, are one, we understand that it is the Ishwara who has manifested as this sansara. He has presented Himself in the form of His creation.

A person who grasps this knowledge gets a Paramatma-bhava everywhere. He obtains the Param-Satya in the form of the Tattva-sakshatkara.

The Vaishnava, Shaiva, Shakta, Ganapatya and Saurya believers all accept this Mata. Among the Acharyas, Shankar, Ramanuja, Nimbarka, Vallabh and others know that it is the one Bhagwan who manifests in many forms. The obvious conclusion will be that in the Matas that do not accept the Vedas, the Ishwara is nirakara and stays in the seventh Heaven. In the philosophies founded on the Vedas, Bhagwan manifests even as clay.

When Bhagwan is clay, His murtis will be made, and their puja will be done. And then, Bhagwan's Avatar comes even as trees, cows, etc. When He appears in form of objects He is in the form of Dharma. His Avatar is in the form of an individual, and it becomes bhakti. In ekagrata His Avatar is in the form of Yoga, and in the buddhi His Avatar is in the form of Gnan.

The purport of this is that a person who has understood Bhagwan's svabhava knows that everything is Bhagwan's Avatar - a stone, tree, animal, boar, lion, horse, or something else. Bhagwan's taking an Avatar in the form of a manushya is meant for us to learn the bhava of a manushya.

The Devtas prayed to Vishnu Bhagwan to descend to the earth in an Avatar to remove the burden on the prithivi. The burden on the prithivi means, the

increase of people who have abhiman. Satpurushas feel distressed when abhiman develops in the satta, chitta, and anandata. To remove their dukha and remove the abhiman that is a form of paapa, Bhagwan accepted the prayer of the Devtas. He took an Avatar as Rama in the Surya-vansha. He killed the Rakshasas and established kirti.

A manushya's kalyan is in doing shravan and kirtan. His whole jeevan gets filled with Bhagwan if he does this. All his paapa-tapa are removed.

A non-descript, ordinary person is not called Bhagwan! The Paramatma is one who existed before the creation of this world, and created this world, but was not made. The world is false, but He is not false. The world keeps burning and dying, but He remains unchanged. The world emerges from Him and is immersed in Him; He remains unchanging in the sthiti and pralay of this srishti.

The people who are unable to describe the relationship between the sansara and the Paramatma cannot describe the relationship between the jeeva and the Paramatma either. They can shut their eyes and do dhyana, they can become an asanga drashta, or they can do bhavna. However, they won't know what the connection is between this interactive world made of the pancha bhoota, and the Paramatma. Actually, the activities they do are not the swarup of the Paramatma. Even the feeling of being a sakshi is a bhava and so is the feeling of being asanga and nirakara.

The Paramatma is the cause of srishti, sthiti, and pralay. He is the magician. A magician does not get deluded by the magic show he presents. The Paramatma is beyond imagination. He is Sita-pati Ramachandra. Vyasaji bows down to Him.

This 'Adhyatma Ramayana' is the Ganga that has come from Shankarji, who is like a mountain. This Ganga merges into the ocean that is the form of Rama. This Ganga purifies all the three lokas - this mortal world, Swarga and the nether world.

Parwati always stays close to this Ganga. She places a question to Shankarji. The question is about the Sanatana Tattva. 'Please let me drink in the rasa in which Gnan-vairagya and bhakti are combined in one charitra. Please explain the rahasya of Rama to me. I have heard that when bhakti comes into a person's hriday he swims across the sea of this sansara.'

The Vedic Mata is that the Paramatma is neither a sadhan nor is He the sadhya. He is neither sanyoga nor viyoga. He is nitya-prapta - always with us - but seems aprapta because of agnan. Therefore, Gnan is needed to obtain Him. The 'Adhyatma Ramayana' gives bhakti filled with Gnan. How can we obtain that bhakti?

What bhakti-bhava does is:

Kalita kandha dhanu toona kati shara sarayoo teera.

There is no need for you to go to Ayodhya, to the bank of the Saryu flowing there. What is needed is the bhava of viyoga - 'Bhagwan is not meeting me.' Then, tears of the pain of viraha will come into your eyes, your throat will be choked, and the shareer will become lax. To get the bhava of sukha-dukha with Bhagwan is bhakti. In bhakti even dukha has sukha in it. An unbroken bhava of bhagavad-prema is Yoga-bhakti.

There is no sign of Maya anywhere in the Parabrahm Paramatma. A person who does Bhagwan's bhakti day and night achieves the Param-pada.

(Vandanti raamam parame`kamaadyam nirastamaayaagunasampravaaham,

Bhajanti chaaharnishimapramattaah param padam yaanti tahaiva siddhaah.

Adhyatma Ramayana 1. 12)

In contrast, a person who considers the Avatar to be a manushya can never do bhakti in his jeevan; nor can he obtain Gnan.

There was a doubt in Parwatiji's mana, 'what kind of a Paramatma is Rama? He was distressed by Sitaji's viraha. He did not have Gnan, which is why Vasishtha gave Gnan to Him. If Rama is Gnani, why will people do His seva? What kind of Ishwara is He?'

Hearing Parwatiji's question, Shankarji said, 'Devi, you are blessed! These are not aspersions on Rama, nor are they your suspicions. He Parwati, this is the jignasa of your mana, to know what the Rama-Tattva is.

People assume things about the mana of other people. They discuss other people's daughters and daughters-in-law, etc. He Parwati, Bhagwan is in your

mana that such a question has arisen in it. Nobody has ever asked me such a question! Only a person who has unfathomable bhakti can ask a question like this.'

Shankarji bowed down at Shri Ramachandra's feet and began to describe His Paramatma-swarup lovingly to Parwati.

'Shri Ramachandra Bhagwan is beyond Prakriti. It is the svabhava of Prakriti to keep changing. Prakriti's natural gati is to rise from the lower to a higher level. A manushya sometimes feels compassion when he sees a poor, diseased man. He even takes the man to his house to do his seva. A feeling of pride at his own benevolence comes into him. Then a feeling of disgust for the man overrides his compassion. The different gunas of Prakriti are the cause of these changing feelings. Compassion rises in a manushya when Sattvaguna is strong. Abhiman rises when Rajoguna is strong, and Tamoguna rises when disgust reigns in his mana. The vikas seen in the beginning turns into vikar at the end.

By contrast, Bhagwan is Gnan-swarup. He is ekarasa, unchanging; He is Purushottam, and He is the anand of all. He creates this world with His Maya. This srishti surrounds Rama the way iron dust surrounds a magnet. The manushya does not understand this because of nasamajhi. The manushya wants to keep his agnan within himself and blame Bhagwan for it. A person who is attached to the sansara thinks that Rama is attached to the sansara just like him, and He wept because of viraha like any ordinary man. Even if he were to see the Paramatma stand in front of him, he would not recognize that this is the Paramatma! The state of such a man is like a fool who searches frantically for a gold chain, forgetting that he is wearing it. Because of this the manushya has to wander over births and the realms in-between the births.

There is no darkness in the Surya, no night in it. As the Atmadev, Rama is the nature of effulgence; He is vishuddha Gnan. There is no scope for the darkness of ignorance in this Gnan. A manushya is active in the activities of his mana, buddhi and shareer, but he makes the mistake of blaming the Parameshwara. The difference of Gnan-agnan is not present in Rama; He is pure consciousness. He is the sakshi of even agnan, meaning, He knows that agnan is separate from Him.

Rama-hriday - the rahasya of Rama has been introduced in the first part of the 'Adhyatma Ramayana'.

Rama-rahasya - Rama's swarup is the subject of the 'Rama-hriday'.

Sitaji was seated beside Rajadhiraj Shri Ramachandra in the Court of Ayodhya. Lakshman, Bharat, Shatrughna and Hanumanji were in attendance. Guru Vasishtha - the traditional Guru of the lineage of the Raghuvansha - was seated close by. In the hearing of them all, Shri Rama told Sitaji, 'Hanumanji is our nishpaapa bhakta, so explain My Tattva to him.'

Many Rishi-Munis, highly respected citizens and senior officials were present in the Royal Court of Ayodhya when Shri Rama said this to Sitaji, but she was the only person there who knew the rahasya of Rama.

Sitaji said, 'Hanuman, you are a sharanagata. I am giving you the upadesh of the Rama-Tattva. Listen carefully.'

Sitaji told Hanuman the rahasya of Shri Rama in His presence, at His command. Hanumanji was the biggest recipient of Shri Sitaji's motherly prema.

Ayodhya is the place where the urge to fight is completely absent. Nobody in Ayodhya feels enmity for anybody. It is an empire of shanti.

Sitaji herself is vidya-vritti. She is the Tad-akara vritti that is always immersed in the Parabrahm Paramatma. Hanuman is the shishya, and Rama is the Shasta - the ruler. The difference in them is because of the upadhi of the vidya-vritti in the form of Sita; otherwise, there is no difference in the. Therefore, Sita is the only person qualified to give this upadesh.

The people are getting the darshan of the saguna, sakara Rajadhiraj Shri Ramachandra with their indriyas. Sita is seated by His side, because buddhi is always close to the Atma. By just seeing a person it is not possible to know whether he is highly learned or uneducated, a sadachari with sadguna or just the opposite. All you can know is that he is a manushya. You cannot know about his behavior - whether it is good or bad - Gnan, or bhakti. And so, for the unknown to be known, the only method is through speech. Even in speech there can be several concealed purposes.

(1) The purport of Dharma is to inspire karmas, in order to explain the vidhi-nishedha.
(2) The purport of Bhakti is to consider some One to be the sakshat Parameshwara, feel prema for Him, and do His seva.
(3) The purport of Gnan is to show the Vastu-Tattva in its real form.

Sitaji told Hanuman, 'Rama - the son of Dashrath, the child of Kausalya, the elder brother of Lakshman, served by Bharat, and worshipped by you - is the Parabrahm.'

Just uttering 'Parabrahm' does not give Gnan, so Sitaji elaborated, 'Sacchidanandaghana. *Ramante` yoginah yasmin iti* - Rama is the base of everybody's delight. Whoever experiences sukha within himself, it is because of Rama. A person who does not understand this rahasya is deluded. He believes that sukha comes from outside. The sukha a person gets from money, relations, and fulfillment of worldly desires is a bhram. This bhram is removed only when a person gets the anubhav and Gnan that the font of sukha is actually the Atma within.

The swarup of Rama is the manifestation of anand. It is because it is in keeping with the swarup that obeying the injunctions of Dharma gives anand. This can be known only when a person gets the sakshatkara of the Atma that is greater than anything else.

Vedanta is not a collection of stories and narratives which you can read and get Gnan. To obtain Gnan it is necessary learn from the Guru and then do chintan and manan.

Sat - the Paramatma is sat-swarup. 'Sat' means 'is'. There is no object or vyavhar in this world in which 'is' is not there. 'Is' is there even in 'is not'! No vyavhar can be done without the Sat. Animals, birds, clothes, house - nothing is separate from you, it is all one with you. The 'is', because of which the 'is' of all is used in interaction - that 'is, is Rama.

In the grave usage of Vedanta it is said, *'ghatah san patah san'* - what is Rama? He is Sat.

Sat is that, by the existence of which a person is aware of things. Otherwise, there will be no awareness of anything. You, yourself, are that Sat. If you don't exist, nothing exists.

Aatmaaraamo viraajate` - Rama means the Atma, and the Atma means Rama.

Chit - Chit means that you are aware of things because of Gnan. Sanskaras are accumulated in the chitta, and it is the Chit that is the chitta. Words like 'parichit' and 'sanchit' are also in the same sense. Chit becomes chitta when it gathers sanskaras. Chit means Gnan - *svayam prakaashate`* - the self-effulgent consciousness in al beings. The Chit is not concerned whether there is anything to be aware of or not. That Chit is Rama.

Anand - who is the param-premaspad; the one loved the most? Everybody became entranced by Rama's beauty. He was loved by all. Surpanakha, Khar-Dushan, and Marich saw Rama and forgot every consideration. So, where is this Rama, and who does the manushya love the most?

Ramah paraatma prakrite`aranaadiraananda e`kah purushottamo hi.

Adhyatma Ramayana 1. 17.

Without doubt, Shri Ramachandra is beyond the Prakriti. He is the Paramatma, anadi, and filled with anand, advitiya, and the Purushottam.

You are, yourself, anand-swarup. Janak was immersed in Brahm-nishtha. He and the Sanakadi Rishis were enthralled when they saw Rama. It was as though the Chandrama was enthralled at the sight of the Chandrama! That means, you yourself are Rama, and therefore, you are anand-swarup.

You are yourself sukha-swarup. If sukha abides in some other, you will have to become dependent on them for sukha. If sukha is at some other place, you will have to go there to obtain it, and if it is in some other time you will have to wait for it. Your heart will break; you won't even be able to enjoy the sukha you have remaining with you.

Sukha in the form of the Atma makes a manushya free from dependence. Your Atma is always with you, to give you the anubhav of sukha, without needing to examine it or pay for it, striving to obtain it, and without waiting for it.

The Atma is free of dvaita. It is the form of *asti-bhaati-priya* - meaning, existence, knowledge and anand; the Sat+Chit+Anand, in other words. The Atma is not a vishay of the indriyas. The power of the indriyas is limited, they cannot perceive the Brahman. The Atma is pristine, free of vasanas, and it is the swarup of anand.

Kriya entails effort and fatigue. The Atma is free of kriya and frenzy. It is nirvikar. It is the place of supreme repose. From birth to death there is only sadbhava, no vikar in the Atma. It is stainless. There is no hint of any impurity in it. It is free of paapa, self-effulgent and all-pervading. This purity, and the absolute absence of dirt is not found anywhere in this world.

Kaajala kee kotharee mein kaise`hun sayaano jaaya,

Kaajala kee e`ka re`kha laagihai re` laagihai.

(How can I go into a room filled with lamp-black, with such dexterity that I can come out without any stain on myself?)

How can the srishti be compatible with the Vedas? The one Paramatma is the srishti-karta, because of whom this srishti-sthiti-pralay happens.

What if the Paramatma did not become the srishti?

The srishti may be shoonya, or a paramanu, or the Prakriti. There is definitely a fundamental Tattva - a moola-Tattva - of this srishti, and that is the Paramatma. If you consider the moola-Tattva and the Paramatma to be separate, it will establish the Dvaita Mata. According to the principle of the Advaita Vedanta, however, 'the vignan of one gives the vignan of all.' This is not possible in the Dvaita Mata. The Gnan of the moola-Tattva give Gnan of all the Tattvas.

A man sees some men in his dream. He sees fools as well as wise men. It is his own mana that takes on the different forms seen in the dream. In the waking state, he believes someone to be his friend and someone to be his enemy. He considers some to be his own and some to be others'. He feels raaga-dvesha. It is all the dirt of his own mana.

Nobody likes to be called a fool, because we all identify with our buddhi, and the buddhi is close to the Atma. There is no stain, no paapa-punya in the Atma, which is why we do not accept it even in connection with the deha. If we doze

off and someone asks whether we had fallen asleep we are quick to deny it. Why do we do this? Is it a dosha to fall asleep?

No; this is a natural reaction, because the Atma is stainless. However, it is essential to know that the moola-Tattva in order to know the Atma.

The moola-Tattva of the srishti is Rama, and Rama is Sita, therefore, even when they are shown as two, the Tattva is one.

Giraa aratha jala beechi sama kahiyata bhinna na bhinna.

(The word and its meaning are one, like water kept in different compartments.)

Sitaji told Hanuman, 'I am the moola-Prakriti of this sansara. I am the mother and Rama is the father, but the Brahman contains both the mother and the father.' No such person can be found in this world who is the mother as well as the father. If anybody says he is both parents, nobody will believe him.

'The Brahman is free of the upadhi of mother-father. When the Brahman assumes the upadhi of Rama-Sita, He becomes the father and also the mother. Sita, in the form of the Prakriti, creates this world with the proximity of Rama. She cannot create the world with the Rama-rahasya; she can only create the world with His proximity. All this leela is my leela. Rama does not do anything. I was in Rama's hriday when the bridge was being build and when Ravana was killed.

Agnani people attribute all the kriyas to Rama, but Rama neither walks, nor stands still. There is no dukha in Him, no desire, no tyaga, no karma, and no parinam, even though they seem to be there because of Maya's gunas. Rama is anant-murti and He is inviolable.'

The *khudi* (self) of all is separate, and the Khuda (God) is one. Both the khudi and Khuda are perceived because the khudi exists. People who analyze the Tattva make three divisions.

(1) The Atma-Tattva
(2) The Paramatma-Tattva
(3) The anatma-Tattva

Tattva means gold. It is in the bangles, the ear rings, the necklace, etc. The ornaments are separate but the gold is one. All the akara and prakar of the whole world are Sita's leela. Even the Valmiki Ramayana states: *'Seetaayaah charitam mahat'* - the charitra of Sita is great.

Rama is nirvikar. He is *sarvaatmaa* - the Atma of all. He has no involvement of any work or trade. It is the Parabrahm Paramatma who appears as Prakriti. The separateness is superficial. It is mithya. Had it not been so, the examples of iron, clay etc being one, and claim of 'the knowledge of all by the knowledge of one' would have been false. To obtain the Gnan of abheda it is necessary to get the Gnan that there is no bheda; all are one.

The eyes are in the deha. If the eyes want to measure the anant, it is not possible. The eyes are a camera. A camera takes a photo, showing a smaller version of the original object. Our buddhi, hriday and anubhav are all small. It is not possible for them to take a photo of the anant. A photo of the sky is shown on a piece of paper - is the sky the size of the paper? No!

If a person becomes free of this camera he will become established in his poornata. When the anant is measured with the anant, then you will know that anant and anant are not two, they are one.

You believed the shareer seen in the svapna to be your 'I', and the shareer of the jagrit to be your 'I' - both are Maya. Rama gave Hanuman the example of the akash and the upadesh of the moola-Tattva.

The Vedas state that the Paramatma is not a kalpana, bhavna, or form of the antahkarana; He is the moola-Tattva of this world. He is the chetan-Tattva. Other majhabs describe the Paramatma as a belief. Vedanta calls Him a form of *dhaatu* - a primary substance. Therefore, it is possible to get the sakshatkara of the Paramatma.

There is the akash in which the earth, other planets, stars etc are created. They remain for some time and then they are destroyed. This is the maha-akash that cannot be severed or broken. Walls are built, but space is not cut. The math-akash is a house, and the ghata-akash is the space inside a pot - they are like reflections in water. That, which fills everything without being different in different individuals is the chid-akash - pure consciousness, reflected in every

antahkarana. The chid-akash is reflected in the mithya buddhi, and the anatma is reflected in the waters of vasana. Mithya means something that is perceived but is not real, like the blueness of the sky. The reflection of the akash is seen because of the mithya upadhi; it is mithya because it is not actually there.

Ghata-akash means the space within the boundary - an *avachhe`da*. There is no avachheda in the Parabrahm Paramatma; He is paripoorna. The ghata-akash is kootastha - immovable. The jala-akash, meaning the space of the akash in water, is the jeeva, and the *me`ghaakaasha* (the cloud in the sky) is the Ishwara. The Atma-Brahman is not the karta. The karta is the buddhi that is influenced by the false appearance of the sansara. The jeeva is also a superimposition; it is not real.

This sansara is like a cremation ground of a Tantric that seems to come alive. There is nothing there, but it seems that a wedding procession of ghosts and spirits are reveling with all pomp and splendor. It is the mana that is seen in the form of the ghosts, spirits etc.

Mahadev is alone in the Maha-smashaan of this world. Shankarji alone is the Sat in this great crematorium we call the world. The prapanch seems to have consciousness because of agnan. The only factual vastu is the oneness of the Atma-Paramatma.

The Brahman cannot be broken up, but we perceive all the separateness because of the fragmented buddhi. The jeevan of what is perceived is a dream. It is very little, very short. The one who perceives it is Satya, poorna, and vast. It is the Atma who perceives everything, and the Atma is ajar-amara.

What if the Brahman were to be perceived? If the Atma perceives the Brahman as a vishay, it will be kalpita, an imagined object. It will be small, while the one who perceives will be Satya. The things seen all around will be small. The Atma also perceives the things all round.

The Rama-Tattva described by Sitaji in the ‘Adhyatma Ramayana’, the Rama-Tattva described by Shankarji, and the Brahm-Tattva described by Rama Himself, through the example of the akash, all indicate the moola-Tattva of this srishti. This is the ‘Rama-hriday’. This Gnan is obtained through the Mahavakyas like ‘Tattvamasi’.

Avichhinnasya poorna`na e`katvam pratipaadyate`,

tattvamasyaadivaakyaishcha saabhaasasyaahamastaatha.

Adhyatma Ramayana 1. 12

Mahavakyas like Tattvamasi are not imagined convictions. They are factual knowledge.

RAMA-GITA: The upadesh Shri Ramachandra gave to Lakshman for obtaining the anubhav of the Paramatma is called the 'Rama-Gita'. It includes the explanation of the profound Rama-Tattva.

RAMA-TATTVA: The Bhagavad-Gita is a sacred writing of the Purana style and the Rama-Gita is a sacred writing of the Upanishad style.

The first time Shri Rama gave an upadesh was in the Aranya Kanda, and it is called the 'Sankshipta Rama-Gita' because it is in brief. The second upadesh was in Ayodhya after He had been crowned on the throne. This upadesh was in greater detail and so it is called the 'Large Rama-Gita'.

THE SANKSHIPTA RAMA-GITA: After giving up the Rajya and going into the forest with Sita and Lakshman Rama was sitting alone in the Panchavati one day. Lakshman went to Him and bowed down. With great humility he asked Rama, 'Bhagwan, I wish to hear from Your lotus-face, the sadhan of Moksha which is unfailing and unsullied. There is nobody else, but You, who can give me the upadesh of bhakti, vairagya and poorna Gnan.'

Rama gave Lakshman the most profound secret Gnan. This Gnan is such that if a manushya listens to it he becomes free of agnan immediately. Shri Rama described the swarup of Maya and the sadhan for Gnan, and described Gnan as well as vignan. He explained the swarup of the gneya Paramatma to Lakshman.

MAYA: To have Atma-buddhi for the objects that are anatma, like the shareer – meaning, to identify with the things that are inert in themselves - is Maya. Maya has two forms - vikshep and avaran. Vikshep means confusion and avaran means the covering of avidya that hides the Atma-swarup.

A manushya imagines all kinds of things from the Mahat-Tattva to Brahma and all the gross and subtle matter of this sansara, and is deprived of his Gnan-

swarup Atma because of this. If the jeeva - who is actually a form of the Paramatma - does sadhana and knows the Atma, he becomes free of Maya.

SADHAN: A manushya should come to a definite conclusion about the oneness of the jeeva and Shiva. He should become free of the panch klesha - the five afflictions of ignorance, ego, attachment, aversion, and fear of death. He should serve his Guru with bhakti, with his mana, vani, and karma. He should develop the virtues if shama-dama etc and adhere to the rules of yama-niyam etc. He should free himself of all attachments and behave equal good-will for all. And, he should have single-minded prema for Rama. He should be completely uninvolved in the sansara, live in solitude, and do Vedanta-vichar in an unrelenting effort to obtain Atmagnan. Such a person obtains Gnan.

GNAN WITH VIGNAN: To know yourself to be separate from the buddhi, prana, mana, deha, and ahankara, know that you are the nitya-shuddha-buddha chetan Atma, is Gnan.

Vignan means Atma-sakshatkara, a direct personal experience of your true Self.

When a manushya gets vignan he knows himself to be beyond the buddhi and other upadhis. He obtains the realization that he is one, non-dual, Satya, unattached, self-effulgent, the sakshi of all, paripoorna, undying, ever-free, chid-anand-swarup. This kind of Gnan, vignan and vairagya are attained in a short time by a bhakta, and he obtains Moksha.

THE SWARUP OF THE GNEYA PARAMATMA: The meaning of the Gnan of oneness of the Atma and the Paramatma means to merge into the Paramatma along with the moola-avidya, shareer, our karmas and our indriyas. The laya of avidya is Moksha. The Atma is always Mukta. It is the swarup of the Paramatma.

THE BIG RAMA-GITA: Even after Sita-tyaga, Shri Ramachandra continued to rule as an ideal ruler for the benefit of His people. One day, finding Him alone, Lakshman came to Shri Ramachandra. He bowed down with great bhakti and prayed, as a sharanagata, for the upadesh of Gnan.

Shri Rama observed that the Gnan He had given to Lakshman at Panchavati needed to be elaborated upon for Lakshman to absorb Atmagnan fully. To remove the darkness of agnan in Lakshman, Shri Rama gave him a detailed

upadesh of Gnan with great pleasure. The three principle steps of the process of sadhana are made clear in this upadesh.

(1) To work according to the Varna-Ashram
(2) To give up karma after chitta-shuddhi
(3) To develop the six enriching habits called Shatsampatti and become qualified to be a jignasu, and taking sharan in the Sadguru.

If a person does not give up doing karmas actively and intentionally, he will not be able to come out of the cycle of rebirth. Doing karmas to fulfill worldly desires makes the identification with the shareer stronger, and then it becomes impossible to walk the path of Paramartha.

A sadhak, however, reaches a stage where the difference of Paramatma-jeevatma disappears from his antahkarana, because the effulgence of vignan dispels the illusion created by Maya. Therefore, for the jeeva to get Moksha, karma is redundant. Only Gnan is needed.

An agnani who has anatma-buddhi has the unease of mind, of being part of the penance of doing karma-tyaga. A Tattvagnani has no such burden. A person who has bodha, and whose chitta is free of vikar, should give up even the vihit karmas after undertaking the proper rituals. By the kripa of his Guru he absorbs the purport of the Mahavakyas like Tattvamasi, and obtains the anubhav that the Brahman and the Atma are one. He becomes sukhi and attains eternal tranquility.

The shareer has three upadhis - the sthoola, sookshma, and karana. An enlightened person comes to the decision that he is not connected to any of these three shareers. He is Atma-swarup. He is not connected to the five imaginary koshas (sheaths) of the Atma like the annamaya kosha, etc. He is the advitiya and ajanma Atma that is the Brahman.

The buddhi-vritti created by Tamoguna changes at every level, creating the bhranti that the things of this sansara are Satya. Therefore, this buddhi-vritti has to be given up by using the method of *ne`ti-ne`ti,* negating everything until only the Atma remains. This is the method of the Shrutis to establish the Atma-Tattva, and negate the sansara. It gives the anubhav of the vastu that is pure

consciousness, eternal, sukha-swarup, without attributes, self-effulgent, all-pervading, and advitiya.

Anaadyavidyodbhavabuddhibimbato jeevah prakaashoayamiteeryate` chitah,

aatmaa dhiyah saakshitayaa prithaksthito buddhyaa parichhinnaparah sa e`va vahi.

Chidvimbasaakshyaatmadhiyaam prasangatastve`katra vaasaadanalaakttalohavat,

anyonyamadhyaasavashaatprateeyate` jadaajadatvam cha chidaatmache`tash.

Uttar Kanda 50. 40-41

That means the buddhi that has been created by the avidya which is anadi, reflects the prakash of this chetan called the jeeva. The Atma is separate from it, being the sakshi of the buddhi, although the Paramatma is not separate from the buddhi. Like iron heated in fire, the chidabhasa sakshi Atma and the buddhi stay together and identify with one another. This results in their chetanta and jadata being perceived.

The proximity of the Guru along with Veda-vichar gives vivek of the jada-chetan, making it possible for the jada to be given up. Then the person gets the anubhav of the Rama-Tattva.

Shri Rama explained the method of doing Atma-chintan by describing His swarup. 'I am the form of prakash. I am unborn, eternal, and advitiya. I am always evident and absolutely pure. I am full to the brim with vishuddha vignan. I am free of any ailments, and totally untainted. There is no kriya in Me. I am anand-swarup and eternally Mukta, I have unlimited powers, I am beyond the range of the indriyas and immutable. I am Gnan-swarup, anant, and infinite. The Vedic Pundits do My chintan continuously in their hriday.

This kind of unbroken chintan destroys avidya. While doing chintan you should know that this whole world is the swarup of the Paramatma, and immerse your swarup in the Atma that is filled with the Chid-anand. Then, the difference of

outside-inside vanishes. When you know this moving-unmoving world to be the swarup of the Omkara you get immersed in Samadhi.'

For the bodha of the Advaita, Rama reiterates:

Aatmanyabhe`de`na vibhaavayannidam bhavatyabhe`de`na mayaatmanaa tadaa,

yathaa jalam vaarinidhau yathaa payah ksheere` viyadvayomnyanile` yathaanilah.

Yah se`vate` maamagunam gunaatparam hridaa kadaa vaa yadi vaa gunaatmakam,

soaham svapaadaachitare`nubhih sprishan punaati lokatritayam yathaa ravih. Uttar Kanda 50. 56-61

'Just as water merges into the sea, milk into milk, the ghata-akash into the maha-akash, and air into air, becoming one, if a manushya does the chintan of the prapanch not being separate from his Atma, the jeeva becomes established in the feeling of being the Mukta Paramatma.

A purush who serves Me with his chitta - whether in My nirguna form of My saguna form - is My roop. He purifies all three worlds with the touch of the dust of his feet, just as the Surya does with sunlight. This advitiya Gnan is the quintessence of all the Shrutis.'

Shri Rama took the decision to tell this secret teaching to Lakshman.

Apart from these three episodes, there are some special things that are given in the 'Adhyatma Ramayana'. They are important because of their connection with the chintan of the adhyatma.

SOME POINTS GIVEN IN THE ADHYATMA RAMAYANA WHICH DESERVE TO BE DISCUSSED: The Ramayana is a complete allegory. Dashrath is the jeevatma with ten indriyas. Kaushalya is kushal-vritti. Sumitra is the active shakti for antahkarana-shuddhi. Kaikeyi is the shakti that removes the pratibimba, necessary for Ravana to be killed. Rama's sankalpa has the power of Gnan, which is strengthened further by Kaikeyi's bhavna.

Rama, Lakshman, Bharat and Shatrughna have been given as symbols of several quartets - the four Varnas, the four Ashrams, Vishwa-Taijas-Praagna-Turiya, jagrit-svapna-sushupti-turiya, Ishwara-Hiranyagarbha-Praagna-Turiya, Sankarshan-Pradyumna-Aniruddha-Vasudev, etc.

The purport is that nothing exists, but the paripoorna Parabrahm Paramatma. All the desha-kaala-jaati, sthiti-avastha-karma, etc are transient. To get this anubhav it is necessary to destroy all the subtle enemies that hide in the shareer symbolized by the fortress of Lanka. The enemies are ahankara-mamata, depicted by Ravana-Kumbhakaran and other Rakshasas.

When Shri Rama, Sita and Lakshman left Ayodhya to live in the vana for fourteen years, the people of Ayodhya were distraught. The great Muni Vamdev consoled them by introducing them to the Rama-Rahasya.

E`sha raamah paro vishnuraadinaaraayanah smritah,

e`shaa saa jaanakee lakshmiryogamaaye`ti vishrutaa.

Asee she`shastamanve`ti lakshmanaakhyashcha saampratam,

e`sha maayaa gunairyukttastattadaakaaravaaniva.

E`sha e`va rajoyuktta brahmabhoodvishvabhaavanah,

sattvaavishtastathaa vishnustrijagatpratipaalakah.

E`sha rudrastaamasoante` jagatpralaykaaranam,

Ayodhya Kanda Sarga 5. 11-14

This Rama is the Adi-Narayana, Bhagwan Vishnu, and Janaki is Yoga-Maya who is Laxmiji. The one who has the name ‘Lakshman’ at present, and follows Shri Rama-Sita is the Sheshaji. This Purushottam Bhagwan is connected to Maya and perceived in various forms. When He attached Himself to Sattvaguna He is Vishnu Bhagwan who protects all the three worlds. At the end of the Kalpa He takes the ashray of Tamoguna and becomes Rudra, who causes pralay.

When this Parabrahm Paramatma became Rama, Valmiki revealed the artha of the Vedas in the form of the Ramayana, to tell the world about the charitra of Rama. Rama is mantra-murti. He manifests in the hriday.

There are two people in the jeevan of Shri Rama who give Him guidance. Vasishtha is the Brahmin Muni, symbolizing the pragna shakti, and Muni Vishwamitra is the Kshatriya Muni, symbolizing the prana shakti. Both pragna and prana are very important in the jeevan of a manushya. Their presence is in his jeevan can enable him to attain the supreme goal.

The episode of Ahalya-uddhar has a description that Muni Vishwamitra persuaded Rama to touch Anaya. Seeing Rama hesitate, he said, 'don't be afraid. You are not doing any paapa. It is Your kartavya to give salvation to a lady who has done paapa. All her paapa will be burnt to cinders by Your touch.'

This is the drishti of a Sant, which has the capacity to make an inert object filled with consciousness. The greatness of a manushya's drishti is in uplifting the downfallen. The rules of the outside world don't create any obstacle in this.

The importance of the Sadguru is also shown in another episode. Only by the kripa and inspiration of a Sadguru can a sadhak become free of his jadata and obtain the prakash of the shuddha chaitanya.

In the granth called 'Prapannamrita' of the Ramanujacharya Sampradaya, Shurpanakha is given the character of Radha in the Krishna-Avatar. The purport is that if a manushya connects his kamana to Bhagwan, he gets a very lofty fruit, no matter how low he has fallen.

In the 'Mahavir Charit', Surpanakha, Manthara, Khar-Dushan, Marich, and others have been depicted as sadhan-roop in Ravana's political policy. When they had some contact with Rama they obtained param-gati.

In concluding, it is essential to draw your attention to a particular point given in the 'Adhyatma Ramayana'. The combination of Gnan and karma is the base and support of this entire granth in general and in the 'Rama-Gita' in particular. Gnan is apaurusheya - it is not created by any manushya. In fact, it is not even made by the Ishwara or any jeeva. Nor has it come from any book. Nowhere in this world is there a description of the swarup of Gnan. Tattvagnan has no majhab, or you can say it is the majhab of the Avadhoots. Gnan comes only by complete comprehension.

In the anushthana of a mumukshu, a combination of Gnan and karma is essential, but the Paramatma is not connected to karma or upasana in any way. Gnan is self-established. It needs no help from karma. A vritti filled with Brahmagnan and its rasa stays in the shareer of a Brahmagnani. It rises on occasion, 'I am the Brahman'.

The importance of a manushya's karma has three drishtis:

(1) For pleasing the Paramatma
(2) For becoming nishkama
(3) Because of prema for one's kartavya

The five kleshas were completely absent in Rama doing His kartavya. Had the three states of jagrit-svapna-sushupti and srishti-sthiti-pralay existed in the eternal stream of the Sacchidananda, these kleshas would also have been in Rama. There is not the slightest possibility of bandhan in Rama - He is the pratyak chaitanya, ekarasa, paripoorna, advitiya, and not subject to fragmentation. Even so, He is the beej in the form of amrita.

Rama is nitya-shuddha-buddha-Mukta. His doing tyaga of Sitaji means the Parabrahm is without shakti, He is nirguna and nirakara. This is the nishedha of vritti, the negation of Maya.

Akhandananda Saraswati.

ADHYATMA RAMAYANA

By

SWAMI AKHANDAND

(1)

Suppliment.

The Parabrahm Paramatma is the Sacchidanandakanda - the source of bliss that is pure existence, pure consciousness, and pure anand. The Sacchidanandakanda Brahman manifested in the form of Rama. It is that Brahman who is Rama, and also Krishna and also Shiva. The many formss of the Brahman creates a jignasa to know about the nirakara dhatu in them. There are dangling ear rings, a necklace, and bangles. A knowledgeable person says, 'they are all gold.' You ask, 'what is gold?'

There is an urge to recognize the substance of different forms. If only one form were to be decided upon - that only this form is gold, or if it was made totally nirakara - then there will be nothing to arouse jignasa.

If you want to obtain Gnan about the Parameshwara there should be many akaras in Him. Those who believe only in the nirakara do not obtain Gnan, because they accept only the nirakara form of the Parameshwara, which is beyond the reach of people. Even those who believe the Parameshwara to have only one akara accept that He is limited to that form. They become filled with the shraddha that that form alone is the Paramatma.

Actually, the one who is present in all the thousands of forms should be searched for. Thus, by the method of the Sanatana Dharma - the Vedic Dharma - the Parameshwara is described in the forms of Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Ganesh, Surya, Devi, Rama, Krishna, and other forms. This enables us to recognize the one in the different forms.

Therefore, the fact is that we cannot understand the nirguna, nirakara and nirvishesh vastu without first superimposing a form on it and then negating the form.

The Valmiki Ramayana describes the Sacchidananda Rama with the predominance of the Sat, the satkarmas He does, the kind of sadbhava He has, and His many sadgunas. Right at the start, Valmiki asks a question:

Konvasmin saampratam loke` gunavaan kashcha veeryavaan.

'Who, at this time, is the manushya in this sansara with the maximum gunas and the greatest valor?'

The adhikari shrota and the adhikari vakta are described.

Tapah svaadhyaayaniratam tapasvee vaagvidaam varam,

naaradam paripaprashra vaalmeekirmunipungavam.

'The tapasvi (Valmiki) asked Naradji.'

The one who asked is a tapasvi and the one who answered is not only a tapasvi, he is also constantly engaged in svadhyaya and he has the capacity to explain his anubhav to others. If a person is an anubhavi, but incapable of articulating his experience, his wisdom will remain within himself. If a person is very eloquent, but has no anubhav worth talking about, what will he say?

Narad has tapasya as well as svadhyaya - is constantly introspecting and gaining deeper insights. So, he is an ideal vakta. Valmiki asked him, 'who, at this present time is the most gunavan manushya in this world?'

Bhavabhuti has written, 'why do all the poets praise only Shri Ramachandra? This is a great dosha of the poets - whatever we read is full of Shri Rama's good qualities!' The answer to this is given in the 'Prasanna Raghav'.

Svasookttinaam paatram raghutilakme`kam kalayataam,

kaveenaam ko doshah? Sa tu gunaganaanaamavagunah.

'The poets use their skills to describe Rama's gunas, but they are not to blame. *Sadgunaganaanaam avagunah* - it is the ava-guna of Rama that whoever you see is attracted by His gunas. He is the only form of the treasury of satkarma, sadbhava, and sadguna. If you wish to find an ideal in any area of virtue, it will be found in Rama.'

The predominance of Sat is in the Valmiki Ramayana. The predominance of the Chit is in the Yoga Vasishtha, which is also called the Maha-Ramayana. It contains descriptions of Bhagwan's Gnan-swarup. There is another famous Ramayana, the 'Anand Ramayana'. The 'Adhyatma Ramayana' is an inclusive granth because the descriptions of Bhagwan's sadguna and sadbhava, descriptions of His Chit-swarup and Anand-swarup are all given in it. It contains Bhagwan's Anand-leela, Chit-leela, and Sat-leela. One thing worth noting in it is that Ravana is a shishya of the Sanat Kumars and also of Naradji. They tell him that this Rama is Bhagwan. After hearing this, Ravana decided, 'I want to die at the hands of Rama.' These Sants did not leave even Ravana an a-bhakta. He, who we see as Ravana from the outside, has the beej of bhakti in him.

When we see anybody as bad it is our own mana that is bad. Whether the person is actually bad or not is not conclusive.

Regarding the charit of Shri Ramachandra Shri Ramanujacharya has said, 'I have done shravan of the Valmiki Ramayana eighteen times from the lips of my Guruji. Each time I found a new meaning in it.' There is a commentary on the Valmiki Ramayana called 'Bhushan', which enumerates these eighteen new meanings.

So, Rama is the Param-Tattva. The Brahman described in Vedanta is sakshat Rama. Rama-Sita are the Abhinna-Tattva. Sita is not separate from Rama and Rama is not separate from Sita. Bharatji is the form of a bhakta and Shatrughnaji is the servant of Bhagwan's servant. Lakshmanji is Bhagwan Ramachandra's companion. The special factor about Hanumanji is that a Bhakta who chants the name of Rama unceasingly may or may not tell Him, but Rama reaches everywhere for His bhakta's benefit.

Now, Shri Rama is to be described. This is the 'Adhyatma Ramayana'. *Rama-ayana* means the house of Rama. 'Ayan' means house. 'Ramcharitamanas' means the source of Shri Rama's charit. The form of the katha emerges from the lake of the manas.

Chalee subhaga kavitaa saritaa saun,

raama bimala jasa jasa bharitaa sau.

In the Ramcharitamanasa the poetry of the amrita of Rama's charit flows.

Where does it originate?

The Gangaji, the Saryu, the Brahmaputra and other rivers originate from the Mansarovar. In the same way this Rama-katha originates in the *maanasa* - the mana that is spiritual. The meaning given by Goswami Tulsidasji for the word 'manas' is, basically, the adhyatma. If Goswamiji has taken the maximum number of points from anywhere, it is from the 'Adhyatma Ramayana'.

The meaning of the word 'adhyatma' is that the mana is in the shareer and the roop of Shri Rama that is in the mana is what we ensconce on the throne of this granth.

'Adhyatma Ramayana' means the picture of that Rama, who is enthroned in our hriday as the antaratma, the antaryami.

Baal Kanda

The First Sarga

Rama-hriday

Yah prithiveebharavaaranaaya divijaih sampraarthitashchinmayah sanjaatah prithiveetale` ravikule` maayaamanushyoavyayah,

nishchakram hataraakshasah punaragaad brahmatvamaadyam sthiraam keertim paapaharaam vidhaaya jagataam tam jaanakeesham bhaje`. 1. 1

First of all we salute Bhagwan Shri Rama.

CHINMAYA: Shri Rama is chinmaya. He has an akara, but no jadata. His shareer is made of earth, water, fire etc but the dhyana-murti of which dhyana is done - and which is the swarup of Rama - is not made of the five elements; it is chinmaya.

The Brihadbrahm Samhita says, *'aanandamaatrakarapaada mukhodaraadim.'*

In Bhagwan's swarup, what are His hands made of? They are made of anand. What are His feet made of? They are made of anand. What is His face made of? It is made of anand. What is His stomach made of? It is made of anand. The face of anand, the stomach of anand, hands and feet of anand - anand, only anand! It is anand that has manifested in the form of Rama. The anandmaya is chinmaya, and the chinmaya is anandmaya. The dukha and poverty of the sansara never touched Rama.

Yah prithiveebharavaaranaaya divijaih sampraarthitah.

The Devtas prayed to Bhagwan to remove the burden on the prithivi. This shareer is a burden, the relations of the shareer are a burden, and this entire sansara is a burden on the earth. As long as the mana and indriyas find this sansara enjoyable, and consider it to be good, it is all right, but when a manushya gets the feeling that he is surrounded by dukha, and that this sansara is anitya and jada, he prays to the Ishwara, 'Prabho! Please don't stay hidden as the antaryami nirakara any longer. Come, please come! Manifest in my jeevan!'

Actually, the Devtas pray to the Parameshwara who is hidden in the jeevan of the individual, and the collective jeevan of all beings, in the external jeevan of vyavhar, to manifest as the Paramartha Parameshwara.

It is explained in the Upanishads that Bhagwan has His own shakti which remains hidden in Him. This collective world could not have been created is He didn't have this shakti. Shakti is always active. This is the rule - *kaaryaanume`yaa.*

Sattvaasattvaabhyaamanirvachaneeyaa,
aghatitaghatanaaghatanapateeyasee.

Bhagwan's shakti can do things that cannot be done in any other way. If karya is not being done it is difficult to call it Sat; and if it is being done it is difficult to call it asat. Bhagwan's Maya-shakti is such that it shows 'no' in the place of 'yes', and 'yes' in the place of 'no'. Bhagwan descended on to this earth with this Maya-shakti of His. He took an Avatar in the Surya-vansha. The meaning of this is that the Surya is the Aajan Devta - the unborn Devta - in the shareer of the Virat.

Adbhyah samvritahprithivyaiha rasaa cha vishvakarmanah samavartataagre`,

tasya tvashtaa vidaghat roopame`ti tanmartyasya de`vatvam aajaanamagre`.

The meaning of Aajan Devta is that since the creation of this srishti Surya Devta manifested with the rasa of the pancha bhoota. Since then, he comes and goes every day without fail. This Saurya-shakti is unceasingly active, but it is asanga. It is prakash-swarup. Ramachandra manifested in the Surya-vansha. He was foremost among Karma-Yogis but He was asanga.

Sanjaatah prithiveetale` ravikule` maayaamanushyovyagah.

Bhagwan manifested on the prithivi in the Surya-vansha. There are two vanshas in which Bhagwan manifests - one is the Chandra-vansha and the other is the Surya-vansha. The Karma-pradhan and Gnan-pradhan comes in the Surya's vast effulgence, and the one who is predominantly filled with bhakti, prema and anand manifests in the Chandra-vansha. The Chandra-vansha is the Ahlad-vansha.

Maayaamanushyoavyayah - actually, He is not a manushya. This form of a manushya is a form of His kripa. Maya, here, means kripa. *Maayaa dambhe` kripaayaam cha* - dambha is also called 'Maya'. *Maayaamanushyah* - when Bhagwan sees the condition of the jeeva, He is filled with compassion. ''These poor jeevas are My ansha, but they are suffering in this sansara.' Compelled by His compassion, Bhagwan quickly manifests in the form of a manushya. Don't think that He is born like any other baby! He is avyaya, meaning, He is everlasting, eternal.

Nishchakram - Bhagwan does not use His Chakra to kill His enemies. There is nothing surprising if Bhagwan uses His Chakra to kill His enemies because the Chakra of Kaala is always turning. Time never stands still. It is a toy in Bhagwan's hand. Nobody can escape mrityu in the wheel of Time. Bhagwan Shri Ramachandra did not use His Chakra. He did not take it in His hand and direct it towards anybody. Death by the Chakra is natural, and the person killed by Bhagwan's Chakra gets Mukti. Shri Rama - *hataraakshasah* - killed the Rakshasas without using His Chakra,

Then, *brahmatvamaadyam sthiraam* - He became established in His Brahm-swarup. That is why He is called a manushya created by Maya. He is the sakshat Brahman. *Keerti paapaharaam vidhaaya jagataam* - His glory was established in the world, and people sing His glories and cross over the sea of this sansara. Bhagwan's kirti destroys paapa. Bhagwan Rama established such a kirti that it makes no difference whether people see Him as Bhagwan or not. What matters is whether His glory is seen or not.

Is there kirti in your mana, in what you say, and in your buddhi? His kirti is there among your neighbors and surroundings. This kirti of Bhagwan destroys all paapa.

If the question were to be raised whether Shri Ramachandra or Shri Krishnachandra established Dharma, it is difficult to resolve this question in any another way. The only answer is that there were so many sadgunas in His jeevan, such sad-charitra that when people hear or read about them and sing His glories these very qualities will remain virtues in times to come, and inspire people to do what is good and right. This is the 'establishing of Dharma'.

Tam jaanakeesham bhaje` - we do the bhajan of the Ishwara of Janaki.

Vishvodbhavasthitilayaadishu he`tume`kam maayaashrayam vigatamaayamachintyamoortim,

aanandasaandramamalam nijabodharoopam seetaapatim viditattvamaham namaami. 1. 2.

Vishvodbhavasthitilayaadishu - when our Ishwara is described as being asanga, separate from this srishti, it is not to be described in this way; there should be a connection between Bhagwan and the srishti. There should be a relationship between Him and every grain, every particle of this srishti.

Every jeeva is His ansha, and it is He who has manifested in every speck of His creation. The Ishwara made the jeeva and the jagat - and then He was destroyed?! Had that been the case He never was the Ishwara, nor will He be the Ishwara! If there is no connection with the Ishwara the jeeva is nothing, he is insignificant. Neither is the jagat anything unless it is connected with the Ishwara.

The akara may not have weight or age, length or breadth; it may not be a vastu, it may be something imagined. However, all the forms of the jagat - their lengths, breadths, age, swarup, weight, etc are, in fact, that of the Parameshwara.

Whether we accept Him as the Ishwara from the drishti of the Shastras or not, He - by whom the srishti, sthiti and pralay are not done - those Panthas and Sampradayas and the rasiks believe that there is no connection between this srishti and the Parameshwara; the Parameshwara stays in the seventh Heaven, busy with His routine sport. This, however, is not the Mata of the Vedic Shastras.

The Mata of the Shastras is: *yato vaa imaani bhootaani jaayante` ye`na jaataani jeevanti yat prayanti abhisamvishanti* - those who believe that this srishti was created by some other, first negate it and then they superimpose it in the Ishwara. They also superimpose the sthiti and pralay. After that, they negate it from the drishti of the swarup. The logic of this is, if the cause of this srishti was any other except the Paramatma - if the cause was particles, or the Prakriti, or the chitta, or Karma, or shoonya - then the Paramatma's advitiyata could not be

established. That is why the srishti, sthiti and pralay are superimposed as being done by the Paramatma, and then the nishedha is done.

It is the exclusive feature of our Vedic Dharma that we believe the Parameshwara to be the *abhinna-nimitta-upaadaana karana* - of this srishti. We believe that the Parameshwara has not only made this world, He has also become this world. He is the matter of which everything in this creation is made and is the one who has made everything. He is the substance and also the maker of this world. No other Dharma - neither Islam, nor Christianity, nor Jainism, nor Buddhism, nor any other - has this principle.

The Vedic Dharma says that Bhagwan is the maker and also the substance of all creation. He is the potter as well as the clay of which the pot is made. This world is the pot and the potter is the Parameshwara. The Parameshwara not only makes the pot, He also becomes the clay in the pot.

There is a connection between the Parameshwara and every particle, and every moment in this world. This connection is never severed. This is why the Vedantis have the pledge of the vignan of one giving the vignan of all. If you understand the Parameshwara you will understand all things. This unique principle of the Vedic Dharma is not found in any other Dharma.

The cause of the creation, sustenance, and dissolution of this world is one. It is not that the one who creates, the one who establishes and the one who destroys are separate. That means, there is no difference in Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. The instrumental cause and the matter of this world are not separate. The one Parameshwara is the ashray of all the Maya and multiplicity that we perceive. *Vighatamaayam* - He is free of Maya, and His murti is beyond imagination.

Aanandasaandramamalam nijabodharoopam - there is dense anand. Just as rain clouds are filled with moisture, this Parameshwara, Ramachandra - what is He?

Oh, He is filled with anand! Anand inside and anand outside, anand to the left and anand to the right, anand above and anand below. It is as thought anand has become solid and manifested in the form of Shri Ramachandra. There is no impurity of any kind in Him - no Karma-mala, no Maya-mala, and no Aanav-mala

When a jeeva considers himself to be the karta of any karma, he gets bound with the mala of that karma. When he listens to the Vedas, Shastras, Puranas etc, and feels he is an akarta he gets bound by Maya-mala. Even after getting Gnan (knowledge) he is not independent; even if he is independent he does not have Gnan (enlightenment). This mala is extremely subtle. It is an Aanav-mala.

The belief that the deha is the Brahman is a mala that prevents a person from becoming one with the Brahman. Some people say, 'I have attained Brahmagnan Now I have become svatantra. I am free to do what I want.' This is not Brahmagnan, this is mala. Some people say, 'I don't know all this Brahman-Brahman! I will do what I feel like doing.' This is also the malinata of the mana. If a man boats, 'I did this and this and this', he is superimposing kartritva on himself. To believe yourself to be an akarta is also a mala, just as it is a mala to believe yourself to be svatantra, without having obtained Gnan. Furthermore, if a person obtains Gnan, but his *pashutva* - his dependency and lowly animal instincts - are not removed, that is also mala.

Bhagwan is nirmal - there is no whiff of mala in Him. The mala is in this jagat.

Nijabodharoopam seetaapatim viditatattvamaham namaami - Shri Rama is *nijabodha svaroopa* - He is the bodha of His swarup and He is Sita's pati. One Bhagwan favors Laxmi and one Bhagwan favors Prithivi. Examine Bhagwan's Avatars. You will see that one is Laxmi-pati and the other is Sita-pati. Rajas say, 'I am bhoopati' or 'I am pritivipati'. This is wrong. Laxmiji's pati is the Parameshwara. If a jeeva considers himself to be Laxmipati he will be guilty of an offence. When he is made to stand before Bhagwan and Bhagwan asks him, 'well, My brother, did you call yourself the Master of My wife?' he will have nothing to say in his own defense.

So, when Ramachandra Bhagwan came to walk around on this Prithivi she offered Him her all-in-all in the form of Sita. And when Bhagwan came in the form of Laxmipati - the all-in-all of Laxmiji's swarup - He was married to Rukmini. Rukmini is svarna-Laxmi, sarva-Laxmi.

Shri Krishna is married to svarna-Laxmi, and Shri Rama is married to krishi-Laxmi. Rama becomes a Raja and arranges for food to be grown in greater quantities so that there is enough for all and nobody goes hungry. He destroys the Asuras.

Shri Krishna manifests in the house of a gwala - a cowherd - and establishes the golden city of Dwarka. The Avatars of Bhagwan Shri Krishna and Bhagwan Shri Rama are a coordination of the svarna-Laxmi and the krishi-Laxmi.

This is Sitapati Bhagwan Ramachandra. He knows the rahasya of this jagat, the Atma, the Paramatma, the Ishwara, and everything. I bow down at His charan.

Pathanti ye` nityamananyache`tasah shrinvanti chaadhyaatmikasangnitam shubham,

raamaayanam sarvapuraanasamatam nirdhootapaapaa harime`va yaanti te`. 1.3.

Adhyaatmaraamaayaname`va nityam pathe`dyadeechchhe`dbhavabandhamukttim,

gavaam sahasraayutakotidaanaat falam labdhe`dyah shrinuyaatsa nityam 1. 4

A person who does the paatha or listens to the 'Adhyatma Ramayana' every day, applying his mana fully, gets the fruit of doing millions of go-daan instantly.

This 'Adhyatma Ramayana' is in keeping with all the Puranas. The Puranas state exactly what has been heard by the writer. Nothing new is added to it to emphasize or belittle any point.

The Devta of the Itihasas is called *'sookaramukhi'* - meaning, having the face of a boar. A boar digs the earth with its snout to find anything of its interest that is buried in the ground. The Devta of the Puranas is called *'shukamukhi'* - meaning, having the face of a parrot. A parrot repeats what it hears. This is the description given in the ancient granths.

From the viewpoint of the Itihasa, the sages did research about what happened, when it happened and where it happened. The responsibility of this belongs to those who are learned in the Shastras, about what is concealed in the womb of the earth.

Our purpose is to do the chintan of Rama's swarup, to think of Him, to listen to His katha and get the anand of these. *'Sarvapuraanaasammatam'* - where did we hear about Shri Rama?

We heard about Him from our father, who heard from our grandfather, who heard from our great grandfather, in an unbroken tradition. We have been doing the shravan of the Rama-charit for generations. This Rama-charit fills our hriday with Shri Rama.

What happens when we do the shravan of Shri Rama's charitra?

The worldly thoughts that keep causing confusion in our mana, like 'me-mine', 'you-yours', 'this-that', 'like this-like that' etc and our paapa-tapa are all removed. We obtain Bhagwan Himself. That is why you should do the paatha and shravan of the 'Adhyatma Ramayana' every day if you want to be free of the bandhan of this sansara.

The fact is that the manushya is bound so strongly in this sansara, and is so habituated to living in it that he does not even realize that he is bound by the sansara.

There was a man who kept birds. A Sadhu came to his house one say and saw the cages of birds. 'Why have you kept these poor birds in cages?' he asked. 'Birds are meant to be free to fly as they wish. Open up the cages and let them fly.' The man opened the cages. The birds came out of the cages and flitted here and there for a while, and then they went back into their cages. They were so used to living in cages that they felt nervous when they were freed.

Sanyasis are citizens of the world where people roam in the Paramatma. The place to stay in your jeevan is the Paramatma. This jeevan is meant for listening to the sound of the Paramatma, to touch the Paramatma, to gaze at His face, to savor Him and to inhale His fragrance. The manushya, however, is trapped in such a dirty place that he has forgotten this. He enjoys the dirty place he is in.

If you really want to be free of the bondage of rebirth you should at least inculcate some sanskara about what the Paramatma is like, the anand He is filled with, and the leelas He does.

In this, the greatness is that the Smarta Dharmas are made by the jeeva. It is the jeeva who does daan, Yagnas, vratas, etc using his paurush. His efforts create an apoorva in the antahkarana, and he gets the fruit at the appropriate time. This is the principle of the Smarta Dharmas.

However, Bhagwan is not in this. The Dharma of shravan is such that in shravan Bhagwan sits astride every word, and enters the hriday of the shrota through the doors of the ears.

It is one thing that a jeeva's paurush removes his paapa and he becomes free of worldly bondage; and it is another thing altogether that Bhagwan sits on a viman and comes into his bhakta's hriday. Bhagwan sits on the viman of the shabda that is symbolized by Garudaji, and He comes into the hriday and removes all the paapa in it.

That means, the Dharma done by Bhagwan when He comes in the form of His naam, His roop, His katha, etc, and does kalyan of the manushya. This is the roop of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

When a manushya uses his paurush to do Dharma it is called the 'jeeva-Dharma'. No matter how great the Dharma done by a jeeva may be, it is limited. The Dharma done by Bhagwan's appearing in the hriday is endless and eternal.

Puraarigirisambhootaa shreeraamaarnavasangataa,

adhyaatmaraamaagange`yam punaati bhuvanatrayam. 1. 5

There is a Ganga; it is the adhyatma Rama-Ganga.

The Gangaji comes out from the Himalaya. Where does this adhyatma Rama-Ganga comes from?

This Ganga comes from the mountain that is Shankar. That Ganga merges into the sea, and this Ganga merges into the sea that is Rama. This Ganga is the adhyatma form of Rama. It makes all the three world pavitra.

Kailaasaagre` kadaachidravishatavimale` mandire` ratnapeethe` sanvishtam dhyaananishtham trinayanamabhayam se`vitam siddhasanghaih,

de`vee vaamaankasansthaa girivaratanayaa paarvatee bhakttinamraa praahe`dam de`vameesham sakalamalaharam vaakyamaanandakandam. 1. 6.

Now, the katha begins.

It is said that the Kailas Parvat shines as brilliantly as a hundred suns. Kailas means the summit that is reflected in the Mansarovar. This reflected summit

shimmers and gleams. *'Ke` jale` laaso yasya asau kailaasah, kailaasa e`va kailaasah'.* The place where Bhagwan Shiva stays in a posture of dalliance is also called 'Kailas.' Bhagwan Shiva, with three eyes, sits in a beautiful spotlessly clean Mandir. He does dhyana without fear. Great Siddhas and learned scholars do his seva.

'De`vee vaamaankasansthaa girivaratanayaa' - the Devi, who is the daughter of the King of the mountains, sits on his left knee. This is the shakti-roop of the Sadguru - Shiva with Parwati. The Guru is shaktishali - his shakti is great. It is by the Guru's shakti that a manushya gets kalyan. The Devi is the daughter of the King of the Himalayas, and she is seated on Shankar Bhagwan's lap. That means, she is of this jagat.

Sitaji emerged from the dharati and Laxmiji emerged from the sea. That means, there is a saar-Tattva - an essential element - of the prithivi that is Bhagwan's patni. Bhagwan is shuddha chinmaya swarup. Shankar is the sakshat shuddha chaitanya. This jada srishti has a mountain of jadata. The Devi is humble before Shankar, in the form of bhakti. It is like Maya-shakti being superimposed on the substratum that is the Paramatma.

If a pati-patni are at home, but do not chit-chat with one another - the wife busy in the kitchen and domestic matters, and the husband with office work - how will they have a conjugal relationship? It is also a Dharma of married life that the couple spend time together and decide about things. This is an anand of the Grihastha jeevan. A pati-patni should share their sukha-dukha with each other.

So, Parwati asked her husband, who is the remover of paapa-taapa:

Paarvatyuvaacha

Namoastu te` de`va jagannivaasa sarvaatmadrik tvam parame`shvaroasi,

prichchhaami tattvam purushottamasya sanatanam tvam cha sanaatanoasi. 1. 7

Gopyam yadatyanantamananyavaachyam vadanti bhaktte`shu mahaanubhavaah,

tadapyahoaham tava de`va bhakttaa priyoasi me` tvam vada yattu prishtam. 1. 8

Gnaanam savignaanamathaanubhaktti-vairaagyayukttam cha mitam vibhaasvat,

jaanaamyaham yoshidapi tvadukttam yathaa tathaa bhroohi taranti ye`na. 1. 9

'He Prabho! You abide in the jagat; I bow down to you. You see all Atmas as one. I do namaskara to you. You are the sakshat Parameshwara. I want to ask you about the Sanatana-Tattva of the Purushottam, because you are, yourself, Sanatana.'

Sadaa bhavah sanaatanah - one who always exists - never dies - is called 'sanatana'. The face, features, form etc are destroyed. A pot is made from clay. Then it breaks. The clay remains. Forms are always broken but the Tattva is one, even though the names and forms are different. *Anaaropitaakaaramttvam* - that, which is free of the superimposition of the akara is the Tattva.

When the question is very ordinary the vakta does not give a detailed answer. In fact, there is no detailed explanation for such simple questions. In fact, there is no detailed explanation unless there is some depth in the question that distinguishes it from the commonplace questions. The Tattva of the Parameshwara is something that should be kept hidden. It is not to be exposed to all and sundry at random. It is confidential, to be shared with only a person who is a bhakta. The greatest Mahapurushas, whose anubhav is great, describe it only to their earnest bhaktas.

'I am your bhakta, Prabhu! I am your priya and you are my loved one. So please explain this to me.' A pati reveals the secrets of his heart to his patni if he has prema for her.

What is Gnan? What is vignan? What is vairagya? What is bhakti?

All this should be made clear. The explanation should be concise and the matter fully understood.

‘I should be able to understand, even though I am a stree. Please explain to me in a way that I can grasp the answers to the things I have doubts about, so I can cross over the sea of this sansara.’

The purpose of saying something is that one speaks and the other listens. There is no point in speaking unless the one who listens understand what he is told. Why should a person speak at all, unless his words are understood by the other person? Parvatiji was pointing out this point when she asked Shankarji to explain.

Prichchhaami chaanyachcha param rahasyam tade`va chaagre` vada vaarijaaksha,

shreeraamachandre`akhilalokasaare` bhakttirdridhaa naurbhavati prasiddhaa.

1. 10

‘I have heard that Shri Ramachandra is the saar of all the lokas. If a person has bhakti for Him as being the boat for crossing the sea of this sansara, one can get Mukti. This is well known. Therefore, I ask you about this mystery. Please do kripa on me and tell me about it.’

There are two chapters in the ‘Adhyatma Ramayana’ that are very important. One is the ‘Rama-hriday’ and the other is the ‘Rama-Gita’, which is given in the fifth chapter of the Aranya Kanda. Both are the quintessence of Vedanta. Our Dharma is not based only on the stories and narratives called ‘Mythology’. Our Shastras contain an anubhuti - some profound experience - a Darshan. There is richness in it.

A Dharma without a Darshan will not endure. It will be for people with little learning. The learned scholars will not be inclined to do chintan on it. Such a Dharma will be ridiculed and refuted. Others will give up their faith in it; they won’t have shraddha in it in the long run.

Our Vedic Dharma is not like other majhabs in the form of stories and narratives. It is a very great Darshan.

There is no other method for making a manushya free of the dukha of this sansara. The fact is that dukha stays in the mana. When the mana gets attached to Bhagwan all dukha is removed.

If you say dukha is also removed by Gnan, that is not correct.

Why?

Dukha will remain in the jeevan of a person who gets Gnan, but there will be no satya-buddhi in the Gnan. In Bhakti, however, the mana is filled with only Bhagwan. Nothing else is seen. All dukha is cut away automatically.

Thus, there is no better sadhan than Bhakti.

'There is a doubt in my mana. It is because of doubt that a manushya does not get engrossed in his work. If there is a dilemma about which road to take, a person stays at the cross-road; unable to decide and unable to progress. Just as somebody is *nidraalu* (sleepy), *kripaalu* (compassionate), he is also *sanshayaalu* (doubtful). Which path will such a person take? He will become lazy. A person filled with doubt is unable to show his paurush. He can do no Purushartha. So, please remove my sanshay.'

Bhakttih prasiddhaa bhavamokshanaaya naanyattatah saadhanamasti kinchit,

tathaapi hritsanshayabandhanam me` vibhe`ttumarhasyamalokttibhistvam. 1. 11

Nobody can become free of the sansara-sagar without bhakti. The point is, no matter what you talk about, does the listener have an inclination for the Ishwara? If not, he will go on listening to you and forgetting all he hears. When a manushya's mana wanders, and you ask, 'what did I tell you?' he will say, 'Maharaj, my mana had wandered off for a moment.'

*Anyatra manas abhavam naashravam, anyatramanaa abhavam naapashyam. '*My mana had wandered a bit. I didn't hear. I didn't see.'

When a manushya's mana is expected to stay somewhere, and his inclination is elsewhere, he is not able to understand the adhyatma-vidya. So, the first thing that needs to be done is to create an inclination and begin to enjoy the topic. The wish to obtain Gnan about the Paramatma is because He attracts you. When

you begin to enjoy it, it is called 'Bhakti'. This Bhakti takes you over the sansara-sagar. It frees you from the bandhan of rebirth. Apart from Bhakti there is no sadhan that can help you cross the bhava-sagar.

'There is the restraint of doubt in my hriday.'

It is very good if the bandhan of doubt comes. The people who lie asleep in a state of jadata are in the Kali Yuga. Those who have some doubt in their mana have reached the Dwapar Yuga. Those who decide on their goal and start to walk towards it are in the Treta Yuga, and those who have attained their goal have reached the Satya Yuga.

The Vedas say:

Kalihshayaano bhavati sanjihaanastu dvaaparah,

uttishthan tre`taa bhavati kritam sampadyate` charan.

When a person is totally unconscious of the Ishwara, doesn't know what the Ishwara is, what the Parameshwara is, what is the Ishwara within or outside… ……..it is an indication that he has no inclination for anything except the sansara. If a man doesn't know the tail from the horns of an ox, what will he understand about it? An inclination gives a desire for knowledge, and that jignasa is a firm jignasa.

At first the person is asleep in the sansara. Then the mana becomes restless in the form of doubts. After that he sets out to obtain his goal, and ultimately he gets his goal. These are the states of the four Yugas - the Kali, Dwapar, Treta and Satya.

Parvatiji said, 'please remove the sanshay that has come into my hriday. Please remove the bandhan of this sanshay.

Vadanti raamam parame`kamaadyam nirastamaayaagunasampravaaham,

bhajanti chaaharnishamapramattah param padam yaanti tathaiva siddhaah.

1. 12

Some people say that Rama is the one Param-Parameshwara. In Him there is no Maya, no gunas of Maya, and no flow of the sansara. He is the nitya, shuddha, buddha, Mukta Advaita.'

Unless the Parameshwara is present at all times, His bhajan cannot be done at all times. Don't think that you can begin to see the Ishwara in your mana whenever you want, on the strength of your mana. The application of a focused mind is of no use here. We people understand this. How much strength do you have, that you can keep your mana attached to the Paramatma at all times? Had the Paramatma not been everywhere, would it have been possible for you to see Him everywhere by the power of your mana? Had He not been in every roop, would you be able to think, 'this is a roop of Hari'?

The fact is that the Paramatma is everywhere, at all times, in every form, and there is no need for you to put pressure on your mana to see Him. Once you are vigilant, and understand Him - recognize Him - and know that it is He who is everything, everywhere, and always, it will be like a jeweler seeing different ornaments and recognizing that they are made of gold.

I had heard about a man who told his son, 'Beta, if you do this work I will give you mithai.' The boy did what the father wanted, and asked for the mithai. The father took him to a sweetmeat shop and offered him a peda. 'This is a peda; you told me you will give me mithai', said the boy. The father offered the child many different types of sweetmeats, but the boy rejected them all, saying he wanted mithai. What was the father to do? Unless and until the boy understood that any item that tasted sweet is a mithai, the boy would not be satisfied with anything.

To recognize the sweetness is to recognize the Ishwara, to know that He is everywhere, wherever we go, whatever we see, whatever we do, etc. Once you have understood the Paramatma there is no need to apply strength of mind to look at Him or look for Him. Then, His bhajan is done day and night. Bhagwan - whether you stay alive or whether you die. Bhagwan - in this loka and in Paraloka.

Vadanti ke`chitparamoapi raamah svaavidyayaa sanvritamaatmasangnam,

jaanaati naatmaanamatah pare`na sambodhito ve`da paraatmatattvam. 1. 13

Yadi sma jaanaati kuto vilaapah seetaakrite`ane`na kritah pare`na,

jaanaati naivam yadi ke`na se`vyah samo hi sarvairapi jeevajaataih. 1. 14

Annottaram kim viditam bhavadbistad broota me` sanshayabhe`divaakyam. 1. 15

Parvati speaks of the doubt that is troubling her, after thinking of how it should be expressed. If you want to ask somebody something it is not right to say, 'please tell me something.' Oh, my brother! What do I say about 'something'? There are so many things I know about different things, but I don't know what interests you! The one who asks should know the point he wishes to understand. Therefore, when doubt comes in a tangible form, only then can it be resolved.

'My doubt is that some people say the Ramachandra is the Param-Tattva, but is He the Param-Tattva the way a jeeva is the Param-Tattva? The jeeva is also a Param-Tattva and Rama is also a Param-Tattva.'

Why do you say that Rama is like a jeeva?

'Well, the jeeva has also forgotten his Self, because he does not know his own swarup. Ramachandra also forgot Himself, because avidya came into Him. Rama understood Tattvagnan when Vasishtha gave Him the upadesh of Tattvagnan, but before that He was agnani. Before that, He was like any other jeeva. Why should we take this to be the case?

This is one question.

And, there is a sign that shows He was agnani. Had Ramachandra known, 'I am the nitya shuddha, buddha, Mukta Parabrahm Paramatma. I am Advitiya, no other exists but Me' - then, why did He weep so bitterly for Sita?

And, if it is established that He did not know His Self, His Atma, His swarup; He did not have Atmagnan - then who, except an agnani - would weep the way Rama wept? This seems as though Rama is like any other man who has deep love for his wife.'

Gauriji asked Shankarji, 'please explain this to me in a way that all my doubts are removed.'

This question is connected to a brief narration of the 'Yogavasishtha'. It indicates that the seed of the thought that Shri Ramachandra's agnan was removed by the upadesh given by His Guru Vasishthaji. It is quite apparent here, that Ramachandra did not have agnan; He pretended to have agnan in order to inspire Vasishtha to describe Tattvagnan. This leela of Ramachandra was also for benefiting the people.

Bhagwan Rama became agitated at not finding Sitaji at the Ashram when He came back after killing Marich. Shankarji saw this, so he went back without disturbing Ramachandra, and began to do dhyana. Satiji was curious and went to find out why Ramachandra is dukhi, if He is indeed Bhagwan.

Ramachandra did some acting - He became even more distraught and that made Satiji uneasy. In this episode Satiji impulsively did something very strange. She assumed the form of Sitaji for a little while, to test how Ramachandra would react. However, she pretended to Shankarji that she had not done anything. Shankarji said, *'e`hi tana satee bhe`ta aba naaheen* - I cannot meet Satiji physically in this form any more.

'You have assumed the form of my mother. It was an action as in a drama, but nevertheless you assumed the appearance of my mother,' said Shankarji. 'Now, I have the sanskara in my mana of you as my mother. If a wife takes on the role of a mother, even in a drama, she is not suited to be accepted as a wife.' A very strong Dharma-bhava is seen in this episode. Shankarji showed great reverence for the status of a mother.

One question of Parvatiji was about Ramachandra's swarup-Gnan. The second question was regarding His charitra. The Shrimad Bhagwat gives a comment on Ramachandra Bhagwan. It says, 'it is not that the world does upasana of Shri Ramachandra Bhagwan; it is Ramachandra who does the upasana of the people - *'upaasitalokaaya'* is an adjective of Shri Ramachandra. *'Upaasito lokah ye`na* - He, who did upasana of the people'.

This is the episode of Ramachandra's acute distress at not finding Sitaji. If we focus on it, our devotees of the Gaudeshwara Sampradaya say that Ramachandra give us the ideal of the kind of prema a husband should have for

his wife. Shridhar Swami and others say that this is what happens to a man who is trapped in prema for his wife.

When Ravana heard about this he felt elated. 'A man who becomes so dukhi at losing his wife will be incapable of putting up much of a fight. He won't come to me. The wife was abducted and my enemy is weakened.'

Bhagwan Ramachandra did a leela by which Ravana felt relaxed and happy. From the viewpoint of political strategy this was a mistake on the part of Ravana.

The premi people felt impressed that Rama had such prema for His wife. People with vairagya felt that this was a warning about how men have to lament when they get trapped in worldly attachments. Seeing this leela bhaktas are overcome with agitation at the thought of Rama's agitation. If agitation for Bhagwan comes into a bhakta's hriday he will not be agitated by worldly matters. He will become unconcerned with the sansara.

Parvatiji asked Shankarji this question. Mahadeviji told her, 'Devi, you are dhanya! You are a true bhakta of the Paramatma, because you wish to know the Rama-Tattva.'

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Dhanyaasi bhaktaasi paraatmanastvam yajgnaatumichchhaa tava raamatattvam,

puraa na ke`naapyabhichoditoaham vakttum rahasyam param nigoodham. 1. 16

Shri Mahadev first praised Parvatiji for asking about Ramachandra. Most people want to know about the sansara. Whether they want to know or whether they want to show how much they know, they keep spouting their own opinion about the sansara.

In this, if a desire to know about Rama arises in the mana, then something has to be said about Rama - that He is a manushya, that His shareer is like any other shareer of any manushya, made of the pancha bhoota. Some people say, 'no, this form of Rama is a kalpana of the hriday of the bhaktas.'

Some people say, 'this form of Rama is an akara created by Maya.' The principle of Veda-Vedanta however, is such that unless it is revealed nobody would have Gnan about what Rama is.

Is His shareer made of the pancha bhoota, or is it the creation of somebody's imagination? Scientists also speak of imagined objects. Immature Vedantis say that Rama is a form created by Maya.

So then, what is the Rama-Tattva?

'The moola-Tattva on which the naam-roop are superimposed and keep changing - what is that moola-Tattva, Rama-Tattva?'

'He, whose bhaktas experience in the form of Rama - nobody has ever inspired me to describe the Rama-Tattva. This is an extremely profound rahasya. It is the highest mystery.

Tvayaadya bhaktyaa parinoditoaham vakshye` namaskritya raghuttamam te`,

namah paraatmaa prakrite`ranaadiraananda e`kah purushottamo hi. 1. 17

Today I will tell you about this profound secret. You have asked this question with great bhakti. I will bow down to Rama and then describe this Tattva to you.'

A person who explains something to somebody should never display how learned he is. He should not have the feeling that he is a great scholar and doesn't need to bend his head to anyone. When a person shows respect to others, has courtesy and humility, the flow of Gnan appears in his hriday automatically.

When a person stands arrogantly like a mountain peak, it shows his abhiman about his learning. The flow of Gnan can never come to him. Gnan flows towards the humble, not towards those who are filled with pride.

'This Ramachandra Bhagwan is Himself, the sakshat Purushottam Tattva.'

This is explained in the episode of 'Rama-hriday'. A jeeva seated in the deha calls himself 'I'. Similarly, the One seated in the whole of Prakriti is the Param-Atma of Prakriti. Had Prakriti been separate at separate times, separate in the millions

of Brahmandas, the Atma of all the Prakritis would be the Paramatma Ramachandra.

When is His adi?

Nobody can know the adi of even the sansara - how can anybody know the adi of the anadi?

A very famous vidvan had come to meet me. He told me, 'when I have to talk about something I don't understand I say that this is anadi.' That means, if somebody sets out to find out about when this world was created, and what happened before, etc he will not find the adi of kaala. The adi is not a subject of anubhav, and that is why it is called anadi.

The adi is agnat - it can never be known. That is why they don't say anadi. It is another matter to be a vishay of anubhav and another matter to be agnat.

So, when actually is the adi of this srishti? In which portion of kaala was this srishti created? In which portion of kaala was the anta? This is not to be looked for.

Where 'I' am that is where srishti begins. This srishti is the *idam* - it is 'this', not 'I'. Where is its adi? It is *aham* - it is 'I'. And, where the 'I' is created and dissolved, that Paramatma is *e`ka tattva, e`karasa* - the One, unchanging Tattva.

That is why the Paramatma is anadi and He is the form that is loved more than any other. That One is the Purushottam - *e`kah purushottama hi'.*

Very well; if you want to understand what one is, what will you understand it to be? One is that, which becomes two when another one is added to it. It makes three when one+one+one are added up. It is what remains when two is subtracted from three, or one is subtracted from two.

So, unless these three are there - Rama, Lakshman and Sita - you will not be able to understand the oneness of Rama. *E`ka* - one - is that, with which everything is filled with. *'E`ti - anve`ti iti e`kah'* - that, which pervades everything is called 'eka'. *'Vyatirichyate` iti e`ka'* - that, which is separate from two, three, four etc is called 'eka'.

He is the *uttama purusha* - the first person, the Purushottam, the kshara; meaning, the transient srishti is the name of the jagat that is jada. The kshara-srishti is the inert world. The name of the jeeva-jagat - the sentient world - is the a-kshara-srishti which is separate from the jada-jagat. It is detached, and it is different from the a-kshara-jagat, the jeeva-srishti. The difference is that the 'Aham' (the 'I') of every individual is separate in the jeeva-srishti, but there is no separateness in the Purushottam.

Svamaayayaa kritsnamidam hi srishtvaa nabhovadantarbahiraasthito yah,

sarvaantarasthoapi nigoodha aatmaa svamaayayaa srishtamidam vichashte`.

1. 18

There is a chapter right in the beginning of the 'Adhyatma Ramayana' called the 'Rama-hriday'. Those who do the paatha of the 'Rama-hriday' every day obtain the Gnan of the 'Rama-Tattva'. Some people do its paatha to become free of some danger or dukha.

'Svamaayayaa' - Maya does not mean that Bhagwan played a trick or deceived someone, or He had some Maya with Him, with which He created this sansara. You can understand Maya to mean the blueness of the akash. The avidya of our eyes and the Maya of the akash. Our eyes do not have the capacity to see the akash, and this is why the avidya of our eyes sees it as blue. This is the sport of anantata - the akash's quality of being infinite. And, because the anant cannot come into our vision we see it as blue and having forms, which are not the akash.

Maya does not mean a shakti that stays in the Ishwara, nor does it mean the Ishwara's svabhava, etc. Our antahkarana cannot understand this, and what we see cannot come into our antahkarana and explain its swarup. It is our avidya and the anantata of the akash that is called 'Maya'. This is why it is perceived as Maya in this srishti. It is seen but it is not real.

Just like the akash, this Maya is both outside and inside us. The drishti of the things outside and the things inside, like a wall that has space on both sides. If there is no wall there will be no outside and no inside - it will just be space. And, space is not attached to anything.

The Paramatma is within all, but remains hidden because nothing that is extremely close can be seen. This is the rule. You see everything through the pupil of your eye, but you cannot see the pupil itself. The Paramatma is the pupil of the pupil!

Jagu pe`khana tumha de`khana hare`, vidhi hari sambhu nachaavani haare`.

(Ramcharitamanasa Ayodhya Kanda 126. 1)

(You see the world. You are the one who makes Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva dance at Your will.)

This is the Parameshwara who is the Atma of all Atmas. This is how we see the whole world but don't see our Self. When the tilak on our forehead gets smeared, somebody else has to point it out, or else we see it if we look into a mirror; otherwise we cannot see it.

Why don't we perceive this Paramatma?

It is because He is our own Self. He is so close that He is more than out own Self. *'Chakshushashcha chakshu'* - the eye of our eyes, *'manaso manah'* - He is the mana of our mana, and the prana of our prana. He cannot be seenbecause He is so utterly close.

Jaganti nityam parito bhramanti yarsannidhau chumbakalohavaddhi,

e`tanna jaananti vimoodhachittaah svaavidyayaa sanvritamaanasaa ye`. 1. 19

Iron clings to a magnet on all sides, surrounding it. The Parabrahm Paramatma is like a magnet. The magnet does not go round, nor does it make anything go round. Millions of Brahmandas encircle the Paramatma. They get born in Him, are seen in Him, and get destroyed in Him, like iron filings round a magnet.

A person whose chitta has become fixed in paltry things is trapped in them. In Sanskrit this is called *'moodhogarbha'* - a baby who gets stuck and can't come out of its mother's womb. The Vaidyas use the word 'moodha' to explain something that has gone astray.

'*Vimoodha chittaah'* means a person whose chitta is trapped somewhere is the sansara, and he is unable to let go of the object of his attachment. The

attachments of such people are too strong for them to get free. Then how can they get the Paramatma's darshan? Their manas is completely covered by their avidya. Their mistake has covered up their mana. This is the agnan of a person with an antahkarana.

Svaagnaanamapyaatmani shuddhabuddhe` svaaropayanteeha nirastamaaye`,

sansaarame`vaanusaranti te` vai putraadisaktaah purukarmayukttaah. 1. 20

These people transport their agnan on the nitya shuddha, buddha, Mukta Paramatma, the Atma. *'Adhyaaropaapavaadaabhyam nishprapancha prapanchate`'* - the Atma is never agnani. Nobody can have the anubhav, 'I am jada'. Nor can anybody have the anubhav, 'I am dead'. A person can have an anubhav only if he is alive, not if he is dead. Similarly, nobody can have the experience of being inert; only a sentient being can experience anything. Well, let us imagine he has the experience of being jada - who experiences?

People superimpose their own agnan on the Paramatma who is free of Maya.

This is Maya, where there is no Maya. It is agnan where there is no agnan. People lose their way in the maze of this Gnan-Maya and then they get asakti. 'This is my pebble; this is my stone.'

Kankada chuni chuni mahal banaayaa, loga kahain ghara me`raa,

naa ghara me`raa naa ghara te`raa, chidiyaa re`na base`raa.

(People collect stones and make a house and say, 'this is my house'. The house is neither mine nor yours; it is a place where birds build their nests.)

Putraadisakttaah purukarmayukttaah' - which object is ours, in this world? Is this son mine? Is this daughter mine? Is this shareer mine? We acquire asakti for them. Nothing stays with us; we have to let go of everything one day. Wealth does not recognize us as its owner. Our car has an accident - it goes over its owner. It does not know that its owner is lying under its wheels. Gold, silver, etc have no thought about who they belong to. They stay in any shop and go to the house of whoever buys them, and people consider them to be 'mine'.

'Putraadisakttaah purukarmayukttaah' - do this and do this, to maintain your house. Do this, to maintain your health. People are active about these things.

Jaananti naivam hridaye` sthitam vai chaameekaram kanthagatam yathaagnaah,

yathaaprakaasho na tu vidyate` ravau jyotih svabhaave` parame`shvare` tathaa,

vishuddhavignaanaghane` raghoottame`avidya katham syaatparatah paraatmani. 1. 21

'Jaanaanti naiva hridaye` sthitam'* - just as some foolish man puts on his chain and forgets, and searches high and low for it. *'Chaameekaram kanthagatam'* - this is a sootra of the Sankhya Darshan - *'kanthe` chaameekaravat'. The chain is round his neck, but he has forgotten that, and looks for it desperately. In the same way, people don't know about the Paramatma being seated within.

Once, when I was very young, I rolled my penknife in the waist band of my dhoti, and forgot. I searched for it everywhere and finally told the class teacher that I could not find my penknife. He made the whole class stand up and told them that whoever had taken it should give it up, or else the whole class would be punished. One boy said, 'I saw him roll it up in his waistband.' I was very ashamed of my mistake.

There is a popular story about a philosopher who used to note down where he kept his things before going to bed. He would write down where he had kept his pen, watch, cap, spectacles, and also that he was getting into bed. When he woke up he checked that everything was in its place. One day he tallied things as usual. Everything else was in its place, but he was not on his bed. He stood in a corner of the room. 'Oh - Oh! I have found everything else, but I am not in my bed. Where am I?' he said. His wife heard him talking to himself and came to see what the matter was. 'Why are you standing in a corner like this and taking to yourself?' she asked. This is sheer stupidity! There is no need to apply your mind to stupid things.

Just see - the manushya has forgotten his 'I'. The 'I' of all the thousands and millions of 'I's - the 'I' seated in me is the 'I' of every 'I'.

The jeevan of the jeeva is Rama. He is the sukha of sukha and the prana of prana. The jeevas are all separate, and the one jeeva of all the jeevas is the 'I' of all is the Atma, and His name is Rama.

'Yathaaprakaasho' - this example is also given in the Bhagwat. Just as there can be no darkness in the Surya, because the svabhava of the Surya is light, the svabhava of the Parameshwara is *vignaanaghana* - filled with acquired knowledge. He is *raghuttama* - the most superior of the clan of Raghu. He is Ramachandra, the Paratpara Atma, beyond Prakriti.

The shareers are separate and the antahkaranas in them are separate, and the sanskaras in the mana are also separate. The 'Aham' of all the jeevas is separate, but the Paramatma in them is one. *'Aksharaat paratah parah'* - the Shruti has said that the akshara is beyond everything and also beyond the akshara.

Yathaa hi chaakshnaa bhramataa grihaadikam vinashtadrishte`rbhramateeva drishyate`,

tathaiva de`he`ndriyakarturaatmanah krite` pare`adhyasya jano vimuhyati. 1. 22

Just as Goswamiji has written:

'Baalaka bhramahin na bhramahingrihaadee, kahahin paraspara mithyaavaadee' - two children hold hands, crossed, and whirl round and round. They see everything going round them. People sit in a train and it seems as though houses and gardens are passing by. People get deluded and accuse each other of telling lies. The power of perception is destroyed.

Jathaa gagana ghana patala nihaaree, jhampe`hun bhaanu kahahin kuvichaaree.

nirakhahin lochana anguli laaye`, pragata jugala sasi tinha kanhan bhaaye`.

(Foolish people see dark clouds and fear that the sun will be swallowed up by them. The press a finger to their eyelid and see two moons in the sky.)

Thus, there is the deha and the indriyas, and there is a karta-Atma in it. The karma done by the karta-Atma is called *'pare`adhyaasya jano vimuhyati'* - the manushya superimposes that karma on the akarta-Atma, and becomes deluded. It is the deha and indriyas who do the work, but the work is attributed to Bhagwan.

Those who attribute their work to Bhagwan are also very terrible. They steal something. When caught they say, 'it was Bhagwan's prompting.' When they have to face the punishment of their crime they climb up on the scaffolding to be hung weeping and beating their heads. They take Bhagwan's name when it suits their purpose.

Naaho na raatrih savituryathaa bhave`t prakaasharoopaavyabhichaaratah kvachit,

gnaane` tathaagnaanamidam dvayam harau raame` katham sthaasyati shuddhachidghane`. 1. 23

For the Surya there is neither day nor night. The Surya has never seen anything called night, because it is day wherever the Surya is. And, when there is no night there can be no day, because it is night that separates one day from the next. How can the days be separated unless night comes?

In the same way, there is no Gnan and no agnan in Rama Paramatma. Rama always stays as the form of light. There is no day and night in the Surya. Rama always stays as the form of light. There is no day and night in Him and no difference of Gnan and agnan either. He is the shuddha chid-ghana - He is pure consciousness.

Tasmaatparaanandamaye` raghoottame` vignaanaroope` hi na vidyate` tahmah,

agnaanasaakshinyaravindalochane` maayaashrayatvaanna hi mohakaaranam.

1. 24

Raghunandan Bhagwan Ramachandra is the swarup of Paramananda. He is vignan swarup. It is said that if somebody is filled vignan only, but is not the anand-swarup, he will not have prema-priyata. He will not be the most loved. And, if he is only param-priya but is separate from us, he will be a vishay of Vignan.

Bhagwan is neither a vishay of vignan, nor is He ever tyajya - you can never give Him up - because He is the Paramananda-swarup. He is the param-premaspad. There is no hint of darkness in Him; He is the sakshi of agnan. Just as somebody

realizes, 'I was unaware of anything during this time. Night came, I felt sleepy, and I went to sleep. *"E`taavantam kaalam aham sukhamavaapsam"* - I slept comfortably for six hours at a stretch. *"Na kinchive`disam"* - I knew nothing!'

How do you know that you were not aware of anything? There was some One who informed you about it. There is One who experiences the jagrit avastha as being separate from the svapna avastha. Just as we absorb the vishays in the jagrit avastha, and there are imagined things when we dream in the svapna avastha, there is a state, separate from both the jagrit and svapna avasthas. In this state a person is neither awake nor dreaming. He is not aware of anything. Then, who is the One who realizes 'I was not aware of anything.'?

You can say that He is the sakshi of the agnan. He is Rama, whose eyes are like a lotus in bloom - He is *aravinada-lochana, kamala-lochana.*

He is the adhishthana of Maya - *maayaashrayatvanna hi mohakaaranam.'* He is the ashray of Maya - *'maayaashrayatvanna hi mohakaaranam'* - He is the ashray of Maya, and so Maya cannot delude Him.

Atra te` kathayishyaami rahasyamapi durlabham,

seetaaraamamarutsoonusamvaadam mokshasaadhanam. 1. 25

Bhagwan Shankar told Parvatiji, 'I will now tell you this very great rahasya. This is a conversation between Sita-Rama and Hanumanji. It is a sadhan for getting Moksha for those who are bound by this sansara. Actually, sadhan is needed when the bandhan is factual. If the bandhan is due to bhram, and the person believes himself to be bound and Moksha is achieved by prama. Prama means correct understanding. Prama frees a person who suffers under some delusion. If the bandhan is due to agnan it is removed by Gnan.

That means, at the time you feel you are bound you are not really bound, and at the time you feel you are free you are not really free. Everything is always ekarasa. Gnan is from the drishti of agnan. Gnan is from the drishti of agnan. There is a difference between gnan-agnan. If the bandhan is because of a lack of proper understanding it will be removed by prama.

Shankarji now explains the sadhana for Moksha.

Puraa raamaayane` raamo raavanam de`vakantakam,

hatvaa rane` ranashraalaadhee saputrabalavanhanam. 1. 26

Seetayaa saha sugreevalakshmanaabhyaam samanvita,

ayodhyaamagamadraamo hanoomatpramukhairvritah. 1. 27

Abhishikttah parivrito vasishthaadhairmahaatmabhih,

simhaasane` samaaseenah kotisooryasamaprabhah. 1. 28

Drashtvaa tadaa hanoomantam praanjalim puratah sthitam,

kritakaaryam niraakaanksham gnaanaape`kshanam mahaamatm. 1. 29

'I will tell you about a very rare rahasya.'

This is a conversation between Sita-Rama and Hanumanji. Bhagwan Rama killed *de`vakantaka* - Ravana is a thorn in the flesh for the Devtas, so he is called 'Devakantak'. If this is understood first in the adhyatma, it can be understood in the adhidaiva and adhibhoota. Then any mistake is noticed at once.

In the adhyatma, all our indriyas - the eyes, ears, nose etc - are Devtas.

What are the Devtas like?

The Devtas reveal to us the things that we don't perceive properly in their actual forms. *Divyanti prakaashayanti* - they show us the shabda, sparsha, rasa, roop, gandha etc. This is the work of the Devtas. The Surya illuminates the roop and the eye sees it. If the Surya is there and the roop is there, but what if the eye is not there?

A manushya causes dukha to his indriyas because of his ahankara. He puts himself bandhan. Thus, the Devakantaka is Ravana. Ravana depicts ahankara.

'Bhagwan Shri Ramachandra killed Ravana and came to Ayodhya with Sita, Lakshman and Sugriva.'

'Ayodhyaamagamadraamo' - Ayodhya is a place where there is no enemy left with whom to fight. It is a place of complete peace, equanimity and tranquility.

'Na yodhyaa na yoddhyo yasyaa saa ayodhyaa' - the city in which there is nobody with whom there is a need to fight, quarrel. Beat, kill, or banish.

The Rig Veda also gives a description of the word *ayodhyaa*. *'Ashtachakra navadvaaraa de`vaanaam puru ayodhyaa'* - Ayodhya is the city of the Devtas. It is established on eight chakras (circular objects) and nine gateways. This is the swarup of Ayodhya. It is in this Ayodhya that Bhagwan Ramachandra, Sita, and others stay.

'Shri Ramachandra's abhishek was done. Hanumanji is there, Vasishtha and other Mahatmas are there. Bhagwan Ramachandra is seated there on the throne of the hriday.

Ravana is the Raja of the fortress of activity, and Shri Ramachandra Bhagwan is the Raja of the Ayodhya.'

'Avadha' - meaning, 'a + vadha = where there is no vadha'. (Vadha means killing. Avadha is another name for Ayodhya.) In Avadha there is only *avadhaana* - meaning, devotion. And, that which is obtained after obtaining everything else, is Avadha - *avadhi asyaasti* - this is the Tattva of Avadha,

'Shri Ramachandra is seated on the throne. Vasishtha and other great Rishis are there. Hanumanji stands with folded hands.'

What is Hanumanji like?

Kritakaaryam niraakanksham gnaanaape`ksham mahaamatim.'

Hanumanji has successfully achieved Shri Ramakrishna Bhagwan's work - he is 'kritakarya'. He has not person desires - he is '*niraakaankshim*', free of desire, but he wants Gnan - *gnaanaape`ksham'.*

Gnan cannot be obtained unless a person has jignasa. Only a person who has a thirst for spiritual knowledge is eligible for getting Gnan, because the Gnan-amrita doesn't stay for long in the hriday of a person who has no real desire for it.

Hanumanji had the desire for Gnan in his hriday. Now, what if a person wants to obtain Gnan but doesn't have the capacity to understand? A person whose intellect is obtuse will understand about material things like clothes, notes,

bricks and stones, etc. His intellect will not be inclined towards the Parameshwara.

I have seen a Sethji who is a good speaker on our Shastras. Jignasus would go to him and ask, with folded hands, about the Bhagavad-Tattva and the Paramartha-Tattva. They did so in order to please the Sethji, hoping to get employment in one of his many concerns. Their question did not arise out of a genuine desire to know; they arose from a wish to make an income. Such people don't get Gnan. Only a person with a sharp intellect and an earnest wish for Gnan gets Gnan.

'Mahaamatim' - Hanumanji is highly intelligent, and he also has a great desire for Gnan.

Regarding Dharma there is a question about who is an *adhikaaree* - qualified person for Dharma. One is called an *arthee* - a person who wants something that can be obtained by doing Dharma. The second is *samarthee* - he should have the capacity to do what is needed for doing Dharma. The third is *vidvaana* - he should have a proper knowledge and understanding of the sadhan and how it will help him get what he wants. The fourth is, *'shaastre`na aparyudastah'* - no objection should have been raised against his doing the Dharma he wants to do.

An objection or adverse comment spoils the plan. If I was about to go somewhere and somebody made an adverse comment, my grandfather and father would tell me to wait a bit, and then go. *'Shaastre`na aparyudastah'* - if somebody tell you that you are not eligible for doing this ritual of Dharma, and you insist on doing it - perhaps due to excessive zeal or arrogance, or overwhelming desire - the Dharma becomes dushit.

These four points are essential factors for being an adhikari for doing Dharma.

The adhikari for Gnan is of a different kind. He is not an arthi, samarth, vidvan or aparyudasta.

Then what is he?

An adhikari for Gnan must have vivek. Vivek that is alert. Vivek means the ability to discriminate between what is appropriate-inappropriate, nitya-anitya, satya-asatya, dukha-sukha, etc. He should also have the capacity to give up the undesirable.

The first point is to have vivek and the second is to have vairagya. Vairagya enables us to bring into our jeevan the shata-sampatti - the six enriching qualities of shama-dama etc.

The bandhan of the sansara is then perceived to be a cause of dukha. A seeker of Gnan should yearn to become free of this bandhan.

After this comes *guroopasadana*, which means sitting at the feet of the Guru. It is the pole that steadies. Not going to the Guru is a sign of ahankara. People have abhiman for their vidya, buddhi, abhiman out of thoughtlessness, vichar, etc, but abhiman is there.

Vivek, vairagya, shata-sampatti and taking sharan of the Guru. *'Tadvignaanaartham sa gurume`vaabhigachchhe`t samitpaanih shrotriyam brahmanishtham'* - the seeker of Gnan should go to his Guru with some suitable offering. The Guru must be a vidvan of the Shastras, and have nishtha in the Brahman.

Then the jignasu should do shravan. If he is able to grasp the Guru's upadesh by just doing shravan he does not need to make any further effort. If he is not able to fully comprehend his Guru's teaching he should do manan. If manan is done properly, but the mana lacks stability, he should do nididhyasana. After that he will get the sakshatkara of the Atma.

The meaning of this is that there are four sadhans on each side of the Gurupasadan. Gurupasadan is the axle. Vivek, vairagya, shata-sampatti and mumuksha are the first four sadhans, then Gurupasadan, and then shravan, manan, nididhyasana and sakshatkara. The chariot of Gnan moves on these nine wheels. Of these nine, the main is Gurupasadan , but Gurupasadan has to be in the center for the shama-dama to come first, and shravan-manan etc come after.

Raamah seetaamuvaache`dam broohi tattvam hanoomate`,

nishkalmashoayam gnaanasya paatram nau nityabhakttimaan. 1. 30

Hanuman is standing with folded hands. Shri Rama told Sita, 'Sita, give Hanuman the upadesh of the Tattva, of Tattvagnan.'

If there is even a whiff of abhiman - it may be abhiman for karma, bhava, dhyana, Samadhi, Yoga, or anything that makes a person that his 'I' is great, then that becomes superimposed on his 'I'. Such a person is not an adhikari for Gnan.

This is why Shri Ramachandra said, 'this Hanuman is stainless. There is no dosha in him. He is a suitable vessel for this Gnan. He also has bhakti for Me. So, give him the upadesh of this Tattva.' This was a great pleasure for Janakiji.

Every woman feels that it would be a pleasure to give a speech in public. Discourses by Shri Ramachandra were quite frequent, but Sitaji never gave a talk on anything. When Shri Rama told her to give upadesh it became clear to everybody that Sitaji has Tattvagnan; she is not uneducated in spiritual matters.

Tathe`ti jaanakee praaha tattvam raamasya nishchitam,

hanoomate` prapannaaya seetaa lokavimohinee. 1. 31

Janakiji said, 'very well; You have given me this command and I also feel that Hanumanji is eligible for Gnan.'

Then Sitaji told Hanumanji the actual Tattva of Rama.

Sitaji herself became a form of the Upanishad.

Hanumanji is prapanna - he is in Bhagwan's ashray. Here, Sitaji makes an unequivocal statement. 'I am the moola Prakriti.'

I remember that Vedichanda Poddar of Nagpur once took me to a Mahatma. The Mahatma stayed on a broad swing. There was some discussion on Vedanta, and then the Mahatma asked me, 'do you accept that the Mahavakyas are imperative for obtaining the anubhav of the Brahman, or not?'

I said, 'I believe firmly that the Mahavakyas are absolutely essential for Brahmanubhuti. The Brahman is sakshat aparoksha, but even so, He remains agnat. Agnan cannot be removed by any dhyana, Yoga or upasana. To remove agnan somebody has to speak and explain Tattvagnan to an adhikari of Gnan.'

'Yes,' he said. 'If you accept that satya is required, you are an adhikari for Vedanta. If you feel that the vakya is not essential, you are still a Yogi, an upasaka, or a Dharmatma. The Mahavakyas like Tattvamasi are absolutely

imperative for obtaining the Gnan of Vedanta. Nobody can be a Vedanti without accepting this. A person who doesn't accept the Mahavakyas is an enemy of Vedanta - he can even eliminate the Vedanta Sampradaya.'

Raamam viddhi param brahma sachchidaanandamadvayam,

sarvopaadhivinirmukttam sattaamaatramagocharam. 1. 32

'Hanuman! This Rama is the sakshat Parabrahm!'

This is said in the words of the Vedantis. Each word of this has a detailed description of considerable gravity. That, which has no fragmentation of any kind is called the 'Brahman'.

Parichchhe`dasaamaanyaaatyantaabhaavopalakshitah punah brahmatvam.

'Parichche`da saamaanya' means, the things that are broken up in different ways. That which has an absolute absence of absolute non-presence, is called the 'Brahman'.

And, this Sacchidananda - Sat does not mean 'to be', 'to exist.' Sat means, 'is'. 'To be' indicates something that changes. Nothing that is subject to change is Sat. In Sanskrit, the word 'bhavna' is used. 'Bhavati' means, it changes within itself. The Ishwara is not 'bhavati' - He is 'asti', He is the Sat - *'asteeti sat'* - He IS.

Astitvopalabdhavyah tattvabhaave`na bhaarata,

astitvopalabdhasya tattvabhaavah praseedati.

He is.

And, chit means - *che`tati svayam prakaashate`* - the one who illuminates everything in needed. The one who is illuminated is also needed.

How is He?

He is svayam-prakash. *Che`tati* - the dhatu (primary substance) is akarmaka. It is inactive. *Chinaanti* is a sakarmaka dhatu; it is active, the one who chooses. *Che`tati prakaashate`* is akarmaka.

The question is not whom it illuminates. It is the swarup of consciousness to reveal what is. Anand means, unlimited aishwarya. *Niruttara* means, nothing is

better than this. This is its vastness and grandeur. *Advayam* means absence of duality. There is no other. What is *dvaya*? This is very interesting.

People read books on Vedanta as though they were reading story books. They will not understand Vedanta; that is very clear. Vedanta cannot be grasped properly by studying it on your own. When it is said that Tattva means advay-Gnan - this has been clarified beautifully in the Bhagwat. *'Gnaanamateendriyam*' - Gnan that is beyond the scope of the indriyas.

Vadanti tattvavidastattvam yattajgnaanamadvayam,

tattvavidastattvam vadanti kim tat yat advayam gnaanam.

What is the meaning of the word 'advay' here?

There are two variables in Gnan. One is the 'idam' and the other is the 'Aham'.

Gnan became the gnata when it saw the pot. And, with the help of Gnan and the pot became the gneya when the gnata got its Gnan.

So, what the true Gnan is, is the advay in which the pot that is the gneya, and the jeeva who is the gnata of the pot, are both not born - advay. That, in which there is no gnata and no gneya. Free of the differences of gnata-gneya and the self-effulgent Tattva that illuminates, is what is called the advay-Gnan.

'Sarvopaadhivinirmukttam sattaamaatramagocharam - something is evident.

It is evident, but by which upadhi does it become evident? Upadhi means something kept close by, which spreads its attribute on to the other object. Upadhi means, *upasthitvaa aabhaktte*` - for example, if you place a red flower next to a mirror the mirror will reflect the flower's color and look red.

There is no upadhi in the Paramatma, so how does the perception of an upadhi come into it? Our Atma is our Aham, and that which is very close - *upa* - to it is the antahkarana. The antahkarana places its kartritva, bhoktritva, karma, bhoga, etc in the Atma.

When we see the antahkarana glimmering in the advay-Tattva without having any real existence, then it gets removed.

'Sattaamaatramagocharam' - this is pure satta - it is not sakriya, it is nishkriya. It is not savishesh, it is nirvishesh. It is the agochara-Tattva. In simple terms, the advay-Tattva is pure existence. It is neither active nor inactive. It is not with attributes, nor without them. It is an agochara-Tattva because it is beyond the scope of the indriyas, beyond the field of perception.

Anandam nirmalam shaantam nirvikaaram niranjanam,

sarvavyaapinamaanam svaprakaashamakalmasham. 1. 33

What is this Parameshwara?

He is anant. A manushya's greatest prema is for his own self. You can see this if you want. A manushya is prepared to let go of his shareer with the thought that this will put an end to his dukha. As long as he gets sukha all is well, because sukha is our Atma.

'Nirmalam' - the Atma has no malinata of any kind in it. A man may be asleep - whether in a katha or outside - but if you ask whether he had dozed off he will deny it vehemently. This is because his swarup has no sleep - no *nidraa* - but he had indeed reached a state of sleep, even though he is loath to admit it.

Why is a manushya so reluctant to admit his doshas? If you tell somebody that he is an adulterator or a thief, he will refute it at once.

Why does he do this?

The fact is that the nirdosha Atma is within him, and it casts a reflection of its swarup, which is free of any dosha. This makes the person feel that there is no dosha in him, that he is nirdosha. This makes him unwilling to accept that he has any dosha.

This Atmadev is anand. He Himself is the param premaspad. There is no malinata in him. He is shanta. The Atmadev is not concerned with the coming and going of the sansara. *'Nirvikaaram niranjanam'* - there is no vikar in Him. Had there been vikar in the Atmadev, who would be the sakshi of the vikar?

Let me talk a little about Vedanta today, because I seldom talk on Vedanta in public. This Atmadev is nirvikar. The shareer was a child, it became a man and then it grew old. But did the Atma ever go through these changes? There was

no vikar in the Atmadev. Anger came so many times and went away, desires came and went away, greed came and went away. Why didn't the Atmadev go with them? He could also have gone when kama, krodha and lobha went!

No! *'Nirvikaaram - na rite` syaad vikriyaam dukhee saakshitaa kaa vikaare`na'* - the Atma cannot become dukhi unless vikar comes into it; and if the Atma becomes vikari, who will be the sakshi of the vikar? Therefore, *vikriyaa sahasraanaam saakshaadaham vikriyaa.* The Atma is the sakshi of the thousands of vikars of the buddhi and thus, it is nirvikar. *Dukhee yadi bhave`d aatmaa kah saakshee dukhino bhave`t.*

People say, 'I became dukhi.' I must have thought, and said, thousands of times that I became dukhi, but today I can't even remember being dukhi. That day I lamented that the dukha wouldn't go, and that I could not bear any more dukha, but today I don't even remember the dukha. I am the same as I was then. Neither did the dukha stay nor did my feeling of being dukhi stay. Dukha, and the feeling of being dukhi, keep coming and going. If some thought comes into your mana you should think that there will be nothing in future. You should remain silent. This is an excellent principle of the Ramayana. This shloka is given, not once, but four times in the Valmiki Ramayana:

Kalyaani bata gaathe`yam laukikee pratibhaati me`,

e`ti jeevantamaanando naram varshashataadapi.

'This adage is absolutely true. It gives kalyan. Don't get carried away in a surge of emotion; it can turn into a flood or a ripple, or a storm. You just stay alive - *e`ti jeevantamaanando naram varshashataadapi* - if you stay alive anand will come into your life, even if it takes a hundred years.'

So, don't become dejected. Don't do negative chintan. The Atma is nirmal, shanta, nirvikar and niranjan. It is nirmal anand. The meaning of the word 'niranjan' is also *avyakta* - not manifest. It is not an anand that can be experienced by the indriyas. *Anjyate` iti anjanah anjanaat nishkraantah niranjanah.' 'Ajye`ta iti'* - this can also be *ajyate` ane`na - ajyate` ane`na iti anjanam* - people put anjan - lamp black - in their eyes to enhance the beauty of the eyes. Which anjan will they apply to the Paramatma's eyes, to enhance their

beauty? Oh my brother! His eyes are so sharp-edged and dark-edged that there is no need to apply anjan.

Anjan means Maya. Anjan means mal - impurity. Anjan means *kajjala* - soot. There is no such alien thing in the Paramatma. *'Sarvavyaapinamaatmaanam svaprakaashamakalmasham.'* The Paramatma is sarva-vyapi - He pervades everything. When you read '*sarva-vyaapee'* on your own you don't comprehend it fully. I am telling you something very simple. The different Darshans give different connotations to words. The meaning of 'sarva-vyapi' is also used differently. How will you know this unless it is clarified to you?

The Arya Samajis believe the Ishwara to be sarva-vyapi and so do the Christians. People who read and ponder on their own think that just as the word 'sarva-vyapi' is the same in all the Darshans, it would be the same in Veda-Vedanta, but that is not the case.

If you put an iron ball into a fire it will turn red like fire, it will become the form of fire. Fire pervades the iron ball. The iron ball is vyapta with fire; the fire has pervaded the iron ball and become ball-shaped. The fact is that the ball is separate from the fire.

The principle of Vedanta is not like this. It is like the clay in the pot that is made of clay.

'Sarvamoortasanyogitve`na vibhutvam' - is it vibhu to be merged into a form?

No.

'Sarvopaadaanatve`na vibhutvam - sarvam khalvidam brahm' - everything is the swarup of the Paramatma. The Paramatma is everything. He is the thousands of pots and He is also being the pot.

Who?

'Mritikaa' - the clay itself. This is explained beautifully in the Shrimad Bhagwat.

'Jaativyakttivibhaagoayam yathaa kalpitah - yathaa vastuni mridavastooni jaati - vyakti-vibhaage` - ghata - ghatatvavibhaagahkalpitah - just as pots are made of clay, and the pots are of different shapes. The fact is that there are no pots in clay, nor does the clay have any association with the forms of the different pots.

In no way is the clay associated with the pots. In the same way, this Paramatma is sarva-vyapi. That means, none of the things that exist have been molded in Him; nor is He the weight in them. There is no one in Him who is separate from anything else - He is all that exists.

From the drishti of Vedanta the meaning of each and every shabda is different from its meaning in the Nyaya Vaisheshik Darshan. It is also different in meaning in the Sankhya Yoga. These are different systems, separate Darshans.

People who do not have a Guru become confused because they read these books on their own. They mix up Nyaya-Yoga with Vedanta. How will they understand the finer differences?

The Parameshwara is sarva-vyapi. Who is He? *'Svaprakaashamakalmasham'* - He is the Atma! The Atma is the one who sees the stree, the purusha, the house, etc in the jagrit avastha. *'Ya aapnoti - yadaapnoti'* - it is He who creates and He who sees the imagined srishti of the svapna avastha. It is He who sees the nivritti of everything in the sushupti avastha. And, He remains one!

The 'I' who saw the dream and the 'I' who slept soundly is the same 'I' as the one who is awake. He, who sees the vikshep in the jagrit avastha, creates a new srishti within himself when he is in the svapna avastha, and destroys everything in the sushupti avastha. And, his name is the Atma. *'Aapnoti aatmaa'. 'Aadatte` iti aatmaa.' 'Atti iti aatmaa.' 'Atanti iti aatmaa.' 'Yachchaasya santato bhaavah tasmaadaatme`tikathyate`'*- if you hear the word 'Atma' in some story or lecture and remember it vaguely, you will not understand it.

So, this is the sarva-vyapi Atma who sees the waking state, the dream state, and the deep-sleep state. This Atma is svaprakash; it needs no external source of illumination to be perceived. It pervades every avastha, and it is one.

The Atma has no need to borrow light from the Surya, Chandrama or the powerhouse. *'Akalmasham'* - this Atma does not malfunction if the machine gets spoilt, it is akalmash; there is no stain of sin in the Atma.

Maam viddhi moolaprakritim sargasthityantakaarineem,

tasya sannidhimaatre`na srijaameedamatandritaa. 1. 34

Sitaji said, 'This is Rama. What am I? I am the moola Prakriti. Sarga (Creation) is done by me. With the proximity of Rama I create this whole world.

Tatsaanidhyaanmayaa srishtam tasminnaaropyate`abudhaih,

ayodhyaanagare` janma raghuvanshe`atinirmale`. 1. 35

It is with Rama's proximity that I have created this world, but agnani people attribute its creation to Rama. Rama is the so-called imagined creator but the fact is that it is I who am responsible for it.'

Once, a pati-patni quarreled over their son. 'Whose son is he - yours or mine?' asked the pati. The patni came forward strongly. 'Have I kept him in my womb for nine months or have you?' she demanded. 'He is my beta!' In the same way, Janakiji says, 'this srishti is my creation, not Rama's. It was because of me that Rama was born.'

The Adbhut Ramayana has a story that after Ramachandra won the war and killed Ravana and they returned to Ayodhya, Ramachandra would tell Sitaji every day, 'for your sake I killed Bali. For your sake I gathered an army of monkeys. For your sake I built a bridge over the sea to go to Lanka. This is how I killed Ravana and the other Rakshasas for your sake. I have so much prema for you! Just think of all the things I have done for you.'

Sitaji got bored of hearing this every day. One day she told Ramachandra, 'I have heard that there is one more Ravana, called Maha-Ravana in another place apart from this Jambudvip of ours. He is extremely powerful. So, go and kill that Maha-Ravana the way you killed Lanka's Ravana.'

'What is so impossible in this?' asked Ramachandra. He ordered the Army to get ready at once. When Maha-Ravana heard that Rama was coming to kill him, he did not interrupt his puja. He placed an arrow on his bow and shot it. That one arrow carried Sugriva to Kishkindha, Vibhishan to Lanka, and Ramachandra to Ayodhya, along with His chariot.

For the second attack the Devtas and the Army of Janakpur joined forces with Shri Ramachandra's Army. Once again a single arrow successful sent all the people to their respective lands. Vasishthaji accompanied Rama on the third attack but the same thing happened for the third time.

‘Next time, take me with You,’ Sitaji told Ramachandra. This time, too, all the other chariots were dispatched in the same way, but the chariot on which Sitaji sat with Ramachandra did not fly.

Maha-Ravana got up from his aradhana. ‘Let me go and see what is on Ramachandra’s chariot that prevented it from flying,’ he said. He came to the battlefield in his chariot. Ramachandra fought with him. Ravana wounded Ramachandra and He fell on to the ground unconscious.

Sitaji was enraged. She took up a sword and attacked Ravana. Ravana fought back valiantly, but Sitaji killed him. Then she said, ‘if I am a true pativrata, let Rama come back to life.’ Rama came back to life and they returned to Ayodhya. After that day, Ramachandra never again told Sitaji about all the things He had done for her sake!

The topics given in this granth are described after this, but not in a list. The charitras of Ramachandra are mentioned, ‘these are the right conduct of Ramachandra.’

Ayodhyaanagare`janma raghuvanshe`atinirmale`.

Ramachandra was born in the city of Ayodhya.

‘Where?’

He was born in the extremely nirmal vansha of Raghu.

The excellence of people born in this lineage is the excellence of the whole clan.

Shaishave`abhyastavidyaanaam yauvane`vishayaishinaam vaadhakya munivritteenaam yoge`naante` tanutyajaam’ - the virtue of the Raghuvansha clan is that every child spent his childhood studying. When he became an adult he enjoyed the pleasures of the sense objects. When he reached old age he lived according to the rules of the Vanaprastha Ashram, and when it was time to give up his shareer he established himself in Yoga. This excellent lifestyle was the routine for every person born in the lineage of Raghu. It was in this excellent lineage that Ramachandra was born.

Was Ramachandra actually born?

‘No,’ said Sitaji. ‘I showed Ramachandra as being born.’

E`vamaadeeni karmaani mayaivaacharitaanyapi.

‘Rama was not born, but I showed that He was born.’ This is what is meant.

So, Rama’s being born in Ayodhya as the son of Dashrath and Kausalya. Dashrath is the form of the mana and Kausalya is the form of buddhi.

Drishyate` tvagrayaa buddhyaa sookshmayaa sookshmadarshibhih - a person gets darshan of the Paramatma with a buddhi that is ekagra and sookshma. The mana is the nimitta-karana; it is the cause that is also the instrument. Dashrath is the assisting cause of Rama’s birth.

How could Rama be born had Dashrath not been there? It was Dashrath who did the Yagna, homa, etc. However, Rama’s birth was through Kausalya, not through Dashrath.

In the same way, Vasudev is an assisting cause and Devki is the principal cause in the birth of Shri Krishna. *Drishyate` tvagrayaa buddhyaa sookshmayaa sookshmadarshibhih* - it is with the sookshma pragna that the Paramatma’s darshan is obtained. The Paramatma is *kalpita* - He is imagined - and His darshan is obtained by the kalpana of the mana. The darkness of bhram is removed by the buddhi, and prema enables the sakshatkara of that shuddha Parameshwara.

Vishvaamitrasahaayatvam makhasamrakshanam tatah,

ahalyaashaapashamanam chaapabhango mahe`shituh. 1. 36

Shri Ramachandra assisted in protecting Dharma, for the Yagna done by Vishwamitra.

Bhagwan’s anugraha arises here. *‘Ahalyaashaapa-shamanam* - it destroys the shaap given to Ahalya.

These stories will come in the Ramayana in different forms. Bhagwan freed Ahalya from the shaap she had been given, and He broke Shankarji’s dhanush.

Matpaanigrahanam pashchaadbhaargavasyu madakshayah,

ayodhyaanagare` vaaso mayaa dvaadashavaarshikah. 1. 37

‘Rama accepted my hand - *paanigrahan* - and got married to me. He destroyed Parashuram’s abhiman. Parashuram had become intoxicated by his own prowess. After that we stayed in Ayodhya for twelve years.

Dandakaaranyagamanam viraadhavadha e`va cha,

maayaamaareechamaranam maayaaseetaahritistathaa. 1. 38

We went to the forest called Dandak. Rama killed Viradh who was not easy to kill. It needed great learning to destroy this Asura because he was no ordinary Asura who could be killed with a bow and arrow.

The mrityu of the Maya-Marich - the Rakshasa who transformed himself into a golden deer using Maya took place after that.’

Marich was actually a bhakta of Rama. In the Adhyatma Ramayana everybody is said to be Rama’s bhakta. Some people say that the arrow Ramachandra had shot Marich with, when protecting Vishwamitra’s Yagna, had killed both Marich and Subahu. This is the impression we get when we read the Bhagwat. Marich’s shareer had been destroyed, but he descended to earth, taking an avatar with the help of Maya. He would become agitated at the sound of the syllable ‘r’ - as in Rajya, ratna, ramani, ratha, etc. Tears would flow from his eyes.

Ravana told Marich to accompany him and lure Rama away from the Ashram so he could abduct Sita. ‘You will get Ramachandra’s darshan and be killed at His hands,’ he told Marich. Marich consented to go with Ravana, thinking that this would be a great good fortune for him.

Goswami Tulsidasji has also written, *‘antara pre`ma taasu pahichaanaa’* - Ramachandra recognized the prema in Marich’s hriday. This is despite the lowly behavior of Marich in helping Ravana to abduct Sitaji.

There is a description in the Kurma Purana that Agni Devta came to Ramachandra and prayed to Him, ‘Prabhu, You want to do all this leela now, so please give Sitaji in my care for now. She will stay with me.’ So, the real Sita stayed with Agni Devta and the Sita abducted by Ravana was a Maya-Sita.

Sita is the form of shanti. She is the form of Brahm-vidya. She is never conquered by ahankara. She always stays with Ramachandra. Ravana can never take her away from Him.

Jataayusho mokshalaabhah kabandhanasya tathaiva cha,

shabaryaah poojanam pashchaatsugreeve`na samaagamah. 1. 39

Ramachandra gave Moksha even to Jatayu. Jatayu had done a great work. Shri Ramachandra did not bother about his caste, whether he was of one of the Brahmin clans like Kanyakubja, Saryuparin, Gauda, or Sanadhya.

'Geedha adhama khaga amisha bhogee' - a lowly vulture who ate meat! Was it a virtue to eat meat? However, Jatayu gave up his shareer for Rama. This is where the Bhagavat-Dharma manifests. *'Gati deenhi je`hi jaachaka jogee'* - Ramachandra gave Jatayu the auspicious realms after death, even thought he was of a lowly group who ate lowly food.

When we see the other forms of the Bhagavat-Dharma, we see how the gwaal-baal followed their calves into the mouth of Aghasura who came in the form of a giant serpent. We see how Krishna Bhagwan followed them. 'I go where My bhaktas go.' All that is very well, but how did Aghasura, who symbolizes paapa, get Moksha? Aghasura didn't even know that there is any Parameshwara. He had never said a prayer in his life, nor had he done any punya. Just as Ajamil's kalyan was done because he took Bhagwan's name, as he called his son who was named Narayana, Aghasura's kalyan was done by Shri Krishna's walking into his mouth.

What was there in Putana? Did she have any desire for bhakti? Did she want Dharma or want to do Yoga? After all, what is it that Putana wanted? Did she believe in Bhagwan? Did she go with prema to feed milk to the baby Krishna? *'Gayee maarana pootanaa'* - Putana went to kill Shri Krishna. She did not think that He was the Ishwara. She had done no Yagna-Yaag or upasana, nor had the feeling of doing Dharma arisen in her. Here, there is no Dharma done by a jeeva.

Bhagavat-Dharma means the Dharma created by Bhagwan. Bhagwan creates Dharma for some people the way He did for Putana and Aghasura.

Raja Nriga had done a lot of Dharma, yet he had to born as a chameleon, because he had not done it with Bhagwan's ashray. Gajendra had to born as an elephant because of the aparadh he had done. Even there, Bhagwan came and gave him Moksha. It is an *aavirbhaava* - a manifestation of the Bhagavat-Dharma – to come and save an offender who was in the form of an elephant. Ajamil called out to his son whose name was Narayana, when he was close to death, and this became the cause of his kalyan. In the same way, Aghasura took the cowherd boys into his mouth to chew them up and got kalyan because Bhagwan went, Himself, into his mouth.

Sakridyadangapratimaaantaraahitaa manomayeem bhaagavateem dadau gatim.

Bhagwan is such that He gives Moksha to even Jatayu. He even gives Moksha to Kabandh. You know that the Rishis would come to get Bhagwan Ramachandra's darshan, but Bhagwan Ramachandra's innate modesty left Him untouched by His own greatness. He greeted every visitor with a smile and pleasant words. He did not wait for the other to speak, as is the etiquette when a person of a lower status comes to a person of a higher status. Ramachandra was *'poorvaabhibhaashee'* - the first one to speak.

Ramachandra went to Shabari's Ashram, even though many Rishis told Him not to. You read in the Ramcharitamanasa how Ramachandra gave an upadesh to the people of Ayodhya and to Hanumanji. He derived anand when He went to Shabari's Ashram. Shabari began to speak about how lowly she was.

'Adhama te` adhama adhama mein naaree, tina mahan mein matimanda ganvaaree.'

(I am the lowliest of the lowly a woman, and a rustic.)

All right, tell me; had Shabari indeed been as lowly as she said, what will Ramachandra's greatness be? He Himself went to her Ashram and spent some time there with this 'foolish, impoverished, lowly' old woman! He did not like her demeaning herself in this way, so He stopped her by saying, 'listen! Listen to Me.'

If someone does Bhagwan's puja, does His dhyana, takes His name, and Bhagwan stands before him, and even then the person goes on and on about their own inadequacies, it is more than Bhagwan can bear.

'I will tell you about bhakti,' said Ramachandra. 'I am giving upadesh to you. Listen carefully.'

Shabari sat at Bhagwan's feet, with folded hands, eager to listen to Him. Ramji began to speak. What did He say?

Prathama bhagati santana kara sanga, doojee rati mama katha prasangaa.

Gurupada pankaja se`vaa teesaree bhagati amaana,

chauthee bhagati mama guna gana karahi kapata taji maan.

(The first bhakti is to associate with Sants. The second is to love to listen to My katha. The third is to serve the Guru's lotus-feet without pride. The fourth bhakti is to chant My name without having any deceit in the mana.)

Shabari was not a jignasu, but even so, Ramachandra gave her this upadesh of the nine types of Bhakti.

'Yes, Maharaj,' said Shabari.

'Listen, Shabari, *nava mahan jaa kahai e`kau hoyee* - if a person has even one of these nine kinds of Bhakti, he is very dear to Me. You talk of being adham? Whether a woman or a man, or any other jada or chetan object, a moving or unmoving object, he is very dear if he has any one of them, Shabari. And you have all the nine kinds! You are *bhaaminee, priyaa* - a lady very dear to Me.'

Shabari said, 'Maharaj, this is Your magnanimity.'

Ramachandra said, 'this is not My magnanimity, Shabari. *Sakala prakaara bhagati dridha tore`* - all nine kinds of bhakti are settled firmly in your hriday. You are not the adham of the adham at all! You are neither lowly nor impoverished.' Thus, Bhagwan went Himself to Shabari's hut and honored her.

After this, Ramachandra became associated with Sugriva. This is the Ramayana, filled with sharanagati. Raja Dashrath took the sharan of Kaikeyi, and Kaikeyi

took the sharan of Manthara. When Bhagwan came to Kishkindha Hanumanji told Him, 'Sugriva is my King. He is the son of a Royal family.'

Even here you will observe Ramachandra's complete lack of abhiman. When Hanumanji suggested He should go with him to meet his King, Ramachandra agreed immediately. In Valmiki's Ramayana, it is written, '*Sugreevam sharanam gatah.'* Bhagwan took Sugriva's sharan. In none of the three worlds will you find a Sahib, a Swami, a Bhagwan who is such a bhakta-vatsal?

You people talk about greatness? And here - *'paanim nipeedayaamaasa'* - Ramachandra held Sugriva's hand and pressed it hard in friendship. Not only that, He allowed Sugriva to test His strength, to assure him that He was stronger than Bali. *'Dundubhi asti taala dikaraaye`'* - Ramachandra threw, with His big toe, the huge pile of Dundubhi's heavy bones, and pierced seven tal trees with a single arrow. Where else will you find such a tahkur?

After establishing a friendship with Sugriva -

Vaalinashcha vadhah pashchaatseetaanve`shaname`va cha,

se`tubandhashcha jaladhau lankaayaashcha nirodhanam. 1. 40

Raavanasya vadho yuddhe` saputrasya duraatmanah,

vibheeshane` raajadaanam pushpake`na mayaa saha. 1. 41

Ayodhyaagamanam pashchaadraajye` raamaabhishe`chanam,

e`vamaadeeni karmaani mayaivaa charitaanyapi,

aaropayanti raame`asminnirvikaare`akhilaatmani. 1. 42

Bali was killed after this. The search for Sita was undertaken. A bridge was built over the sea to Lanka. The siege of Lanka took place and Ravana was killed. There was a mass killing of Ravana's clan and supporters and Vibhishan was crowned King of Lanka. Then Rama went with me to Ayodhya on the Pushpak viman, where He was crowned on the throne of Ayodhya.

What was all this? All this was done by me.'

The vyavhar of the sansara is all for the patni, by her doing. The purush is asanga - *'asangoayam purushah'.* The Shrimad Bhagwat says - *'yayaa pusaam matirdhritaa'* - when Bhagwan first created the male of the manushya species, he showed no interest in interacting with anybody. Then He created the female. She tugged at the purush's buddhi and involved him in vyavhar. When this was the case with the jeeva, it is obvious that the Paramatma doesn't have any interest in vyavhar, unless induced by Maya. It is the Primordial Mother, the Jagat-janani Jagadamba herself who does all the vyavhar. It is she who makes the Paramatma her pati and makes Him somebody's son. She makes Him a Raja and makes Him wander in the forests. Everything is done by her.

See the connection with Vedanta. Janakiji said:

Raamo na gachchhati na tishthati naanushochatyaakaankshate` no na karoti kinchit,

aanandamoorttirachalah parinaamaheeno maayaagunaananugato hi tathaa vibhaati. 1. 43

I don't understand what you are saying, Devi. How is it that everything was done by you?

Janakiji said, 'neither does Rama walk nor does He stand still. He never grieves and He never desires anything. He does not give up anything, and He doesn't do anything. He is anand-murti, unmoving. There is no kind of parinam in Him - no change and no conclusion. He merges with the gunas of Maya and seems to do everything according to her play. This Rama remains unchanged and presents Himself as the variables as dictated by Maya. Everything done by Him is her play.'

After explaining this Janakiji became silent.

Tato raamah svayam praaha hanoomantamupasthitam,

shrunu tattvam pravakshyaami hyaatmaanaatmaparaatmanaam. 1. 44

Shri Ramachandra looked at Hanuman who was standing before them with folded hands. He knew that Hanumanji was a true jignasu. He said, 'Hanuman, come; I will explain the Tattva of all three - the Atma, the anatma and the Paratma.

Paratma means the Paramatma. The Atma means the pratyagatma jeeva. The anatma means the drishya, and the Paramatma means the one Atma in all the individual pratyagatma jeevas who seem to be separate.'

See His method of explaining!

Aakaashasya yathaa bhe`dastrividho drishyate` mahaan,

jalaashaye` mahaakaashastadavachchhinna e`va hi,

pratibimbaakhyamaparam drishyate` trividham nabhah. 1. 45

'The akash is seen in three ways. One is the water stored in the paripoorna maha-akash in this *jalaashaya* - this water-body - then, to the extent this jalashay is there it is in the *'jalaashayaavachchhinna aakaasha'* - the akash that is not separate from the jalashay. Then there is the reflected akash in the lakes etc. They seem to be very deep. It seems as though the clouds are floating about in the water. Stars and heavenly bodies are seen in it as well.

The first maha-akash is all-pervading. The second is limited to the area of the jalashay, and the third is the reflection of the akash in water. Thus, three kinds of akash are perceived.

Buddhyavachchhinnachaitanyame`kam poornamathaaparam,

aabhaasastvaparam bimbabhootame`vam tridhaa chitih. 1. 46

Our buddhi is like a jalashay, but it can only be experienced in the form of the ahamartha - the 'ego' or the 'I'. There is no joy in experiencing it in a paroksha form.

The second point is that the scope of the buddhi - the ansha of the chetan, in which chetan enters - is called the jeeva. And, He who is one in all the jeevas is called the Paramatma.

That, which is reflected in the buddhi, is the karta and bhokta and the one to go to Swarga-Narak. So long as the manushya believes this to be his 'I', he is subject to paapa-punya, sukha-dukha, Narak-Swarga, coming-going, being dependent, etc. The one whose 'I' has risen above these is the sakshi of the buddhi. It is the

akash that is not separate from the buddhi; there is no buddhi that creates divisions. The buddhi that shows separateness is Maya.

Then?

Then, there is only the Paramatma, nothing but the Paramatma.

Saabhaasabuddhe`h kartritvamavichchhinne`avikaarini,

saakshinyaaropyte` bhraantyaa jeevatvam cha tathaabudhaih. 1. 47

The buddhi that is attached to the false appearance - the *aabhaasa* - of the sansara is the karta and bhokta and the one who goes to loka-Paraloka.

You can understand buddhi to mean the antahkarana that has caught hold of the abhasa of the Atma, the Paramatma, which is the jeeva. This false appearance gets superimposed on the non-dual, indivisible, nirvikar sakshi because of bhranti. Agnani people believe this to be the jeeva that is their Atma, and blunder around in the sansara.

Aabhaasastu mrishaa buddhiravidyaakaaryamuchyate`,

avichchhinnam tu tadbrahma vichchhe`dastu vikalpitah. 1. 48

The abhasa is mithya. Because of not knowing the Paramatma the buddhi shows the sansara as real. Avidya is the karya (this sansara). The Brahman is avachhinna - it cannot be fragmented. The perception of separate objects is due to the bhranti of the buddhi that shows multiplicity.

Avichchhinnasya poorna`na e`katvam pratipaadyate`,

tattvamasyaadivaakyaishcha saabhaasasyaahamastathaa. 1. 49

The swarup of the avachhinna Atma is the sakshi. It is one with the poorna Brahman. 'Tattvamasi' and other Mahavakyas show that the sansara is ahankara merged with abhasa. This ahankara - the 'I' - gets Tattvagnan and this whole srishti is explained for it.

E`kyagnaanam yadotpannam mahaavaakye`na chaatmanah,

tadaavidyaa svakaaryaishcha nashyatye`va na sanshayah. 1. 50

The Gnan that the Atma and the Paramatma are one is given by the Mahavakyas. This is not easily understood because it is not given in any other majhab or Shastra. The buddhi of different people is filled with the different sanskaras of their separate majhabs. The greatness of Gnan is accepted in the principle that a manushya's bandhan is because of agnan, and Mukti can be obtained only by Gnan. No other majhab accepts this principle; it is unique to the Veda-Shastra.

The Vedas say that that, which is perceived because of agnan is false. The stump of a tree is thought to be a ghost in the dark, because you don't know that it is merely a tree-stump. All the things that are perceived due to lack of Gnan are false. That which is removed by Gnan never really existed.

As soon as a person comes to know that what he feared was a ghost is actually the stump of a dead tree, the ghost is negated. There was no ghost, but the illusion of its presence was removed by the knowledge that the form seen was just a tree-stump and nothing to be afraid of.

In the same way, Gnan about the Paramatma removes the sansara, the beliefs of Narak-Swarga, paapa-punya, karta-bhokta, etc. Whatever is removed by authentic knowledge is called the *pramaana-vibhaaga* - the department of establishing the truth.

Generally, people are workers for the *nirmaana-vibhaaga* - the department of development and manufacture. Very few people travel on the path of the praman-vibhag. People say, 'until we have done something, and something is made.' This method of praman is such that our work is done as soon as we get to know our Self. As soon as the Gnan of the oneness of the Atma and Paramatma is obtained through the Mahavakyas, the person realizes that this oneness was there right from the start. Oneness is not made; it is not artificial. It is natural.

You know a man called 'Sohan Singh'. You go to another town and somebody points out the same man, saying, 'this is Mohan Singh.' The names are two, but the man is one. In the same way, when you say 'Atma' and 'Paramatma' the vastu is one even though it is called by different names. This is called *e'kya gnaana* - Gnan about the oneness.

Nothing called the 'jeeva' was ever created. It is avidya - meaning, agnan - about the jeeva that Gnan removes. The karya of agnan is bhram. Agnan is a different thing and bhram is a different thing. It is agnan when you don't recognize a rope, and it is bhram when you mistake it to for a snake. To not understand the basic form of something is agnan; to mistake it for something else is bhram.

To not understand the swarup of the Paramatma is agnan. To assume that He is the karta, bhokta jeeva is bhram. Bhram is the vritti of the karya, and this is called *adhyaasa*. It is a false appearance that stays in the antahkarana. Agnan is the karana of the antahkarana and also the karana of bhram. When a person gets Tattvagnan his avidya is destroyed along with its karya.

E`tadvignaaya madbhaktto madbhaavaayopapadyate`,

madbhattivimukhaanaam hi shaastragarte`shu muhyataam,

na gnaanam na cha mokshah syaatte`shaam janmashatairapi. 1. 51

'When My bhakta gets this vignan'…….the word *vignaana* is also used in the Gita.

Madbhaktta e`tad vignaaya madbhaavaayopapadyate`

Who is an adhikari for Gnan?

'Madbhaktta'. That means, Bhagwan's bhakta is an adhikari for obtaining Gnan. And, *'e`tad vignaaya* - one who attains Gnan about the swarup of the Brahman as explained by Me.'

What happens after that?

'Madbhaavaayaampapadyate`' - that bhakta is an adhikari for Gnan, who does Bhagwan's seva and has prema for Him. Such a bhakta will be told all the most mystic secrets. Nothing will be kept hidden from a real premi, a true servant of Bhagwan.

So, a person who is a real bhakta of Bhagwan will immediately obtain bhava for Bhagwan. A person who is turned away from Bhagwan, knowing nothing about Him, with no prema for Him can never get Tattvagnan.

Actually, the Ishwara is such that if you know even a little about Him you cannot help having prema for Him. Even a general knowledge about Bhagwan's greatness arouses bhakti for Bhagwan.

The Narad Bhakti Sutra says:

Na tatraapi maahaatmye`gnaanavismrityapavaadah.

Even in the Gnan of the gopis there was no impurity of forgetting Bhagwan's mahatmya, which means that they were aware of His greatness all the time.

Na khalu gopikaanandano bhavaan akhilade`hinaamantaraatmadrik.

'You are not the son of a gopi; You are the antar-Atma who abides in all. Laxmiji does puja of Your charan.' The gopis have said this at least fifty times! Thus, even the simple milkmaids of Vrindavan had Gnan about Bhagwan's greatness.

When you have Gnan about somebody's mahatmya it is natural to feel prema for him. You also feel shraddha for him. And, when you have prema and shraddha, you also get to know about him and his greatness.

Gnaanasya paraakaashthaa saiva bhakttih prakeertitaa - the summit of Gnan is called bhakti and the summit of bhakti is called Gnan.

Those who are turned away from bhakti and fallen into the pit of the Shastras - 'read this and read this' - and have becomes unconscious - *'shaastragarte`shu muhyataam' - na gnaanaam na cha mokshah syaatte`shaam janma satairapi* - will get neither Gnan nor Moksha even if they go through hundreds of births.

Idam rahasyam hridayam mamaatmano mayaiva saakshhatkathinam tavaanagha,

madbhakttiheenaaya shathaaya na tvayaa daatavyamaindraadapi raajyatoadhikam. 1. 52

Bhagwan Shri Ramachandra said, 'this is the hriday of My Atma. It is My rahasya, and I am telling you about Myself. Nishpaapa Hanuman! A person who is without bhakti for Me is a rogue. He should never be told about this rahasya, because he will misuse this Gnan.'

A worldly person uses Gnan for selfish purposes and for bhoga. A tightfisted rogue understands even better than the Ishwara, how to use knowledge for personal profit. He holds on to it tightly.

What you have to see, is what is important to you. Is it the Gnan of the mahan Ishwara or is it His bhakti, or is it some object of the senses you are holding on to? This is Gnan that should never be given to anybody who is engrossed in the things of this sansara. This is Gnan that is far greater than the Rajya of Indra! It should never be told to a deceitful person who wants worldly riches.

In the Gita, Bhagwan gave the upadesh – *'sarvadharmaan parityajya* - give up even the instituted religion.'

Idam te` nastapaskaaya naabhakttaaya kadaachana,

na chaashushrooshave` vaachyam na cha maam yoabhyasooyate`. 18. 67

Ya imam paramam guhyam madbhaktte`shvabhidhaasyati,

bhakttim mayi paraam kritvaa maame`vaishyasanshayah. 18. 68

'Don't speak of this to anybody who is not a tapasvi. Talk about it only to a person who is My bhakta.'

That means, only a person who has prema for Bhagwan should be told Bhagwan's rahasya, since only such a person is an adhikari for this Gnan.

Shree mahaade`va uvaacha

E`tatte`abhihitam de`vi shreeraamahridayam mayaa,

atiguhyatamam hridayam pavitram paapashodhanam. 1. 53

Saakshaadraame`na kathitam sarvave`daantasangraham,

yah pathe`tsatatam bhaktyaa sa mukto naatra sanshayah. 1. 54

Brahmahatyaadipaapaani bahujanmaarjitaanyapi,

nashyantye`va na sande`ho raamasya vachanam yathaa. 1. 55

Shri Mahadev told Parvatiji, 'Devi, I told you about the hriday of Shri Ramji. Sita and Rama told Hanumanji about it because he was a great bhakta. This is

something to be kept hidden in the hriday. It is pavitra. It cleanses the paapa of a person. Bhagwan Ramachandra Himself explained this compilation of the essence of the Vedas. A person who does paatha of this every day with prema will become Mukta. Even the worst paapa done over innumerable births will be destroyed. There is no doubt about this.'

Shri Ramachandra has said this:

Yoatibhrashtoatipaapee paradhana paradaare`shu nityodyato vaa ste`yee brahmaghno maatrihapitrivadhanirato yogivrindaapakaaree,

yah sampoojyaabhiraamam pathati cha hridayam raamachandrasya bhaktyaa yogeendrairapyalabhyam padamiha labhate` sarvade`vaih sa poojyam. 1. 56

See what a wonderful statement Shri Ramachandra makes.

The Vedantis stipulate that only such an adhikari gets Gnan.

Naavirato dushcharitaan naashaanto naasamaahitah.

(An adhikari for Gnan should not have worldly attachments. He should have no bad qualities, should not have an agitated mind, and not be scattered mentally.)

The Vedantis took this lofty position. How will a jeeva of a lower level get kalyan?

The fact is that a Dharma that does not take ahead those who are backward, and make stupid people more knowledgeable, is an incomplete Dharma. Such a Dharma will not endure. It will be destroyed, because there will more of those who are less intelligent, backward, and downfallen. Their numbers will ruin such a Dharma.

Dharma should be such that it does not demean the people who are morally corrupt, paapi, hungry for wealth and other men's wives, people who are thieves, killers of Brahmins and insult the Sadhus.

No, my brother, Dharma is actually for the people who are agnani, foolish, backward, and downfallen. Dharma is meant to uplift such people. These people should also be treated with respect. Awaken a wish in them to do the paatha of the 'Rama-hriday' with prema. *'Yogeendrairapyalabhyam padamiha labhate`'* -

then they will get the param-pada in this very life, which even great Yogis find difficult to attain.

Baal Kanda

The Second Sarga.

Prithivi's prarthana and Bhagwan's assurance.

Paarvatyuvaacha.

Dhanyaasmyanugriheetaasmi kritaarthaasmi jagatprabho,

vichchhinno me`atisande`hagranthirbhavadanugrahaat. 2. 1

Tvanmukhaadgalitam raamatattvaamritarasaayanam,

pibantyaa me` mano de`va na tripyati bhavaapaham. 2. 2

Shreeraamasya kathaa tvattah shrutaa sankshe`pato mayaa,

idaaneem shrotumichchhaami vistare`na sfutaaksharam. 2. 3

'Parvatiji said, "He Jagatprabho! I am blessed! You have done me a great favor. The knot of doubt in my hriday has been severed by your kripa. You gave me the amrita of the Rama-Tattva – it was the prasad of your lips. My mana drinks it and thirsts for more. This amrita is removing the sea of this sansara for me. I want to hear of it in detail."'

This is called *samaasa-vyaasa-paddhati.* Meaning, the katha told in brief at first and then in detail. There is an ancient book called the 'Purana Samhita' which is a guide for understanding the Puranas. It says that any breach in the link, any point that is missed out or given wrongly in the narration can be identified by the method given in this book. Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj has said, 'if anybody adds or removes a single word from the Shrimad Bhagwat I will catch it.' He had made a vyakaran – a book of the rules of Sanskrit grammar – on the Bhagwat. The Bhagwat has twelve cantos, three hundred and thirty two (he does not accept three hundred and thirty five) chapters, and so many words. He had counted the words. Any change made in it goes against the rules of mimansa.

Thus, to say something in brief and then elaborate on it, are methods of giving a discourse.

'Shri Parvatiji said, "please tell me the story of Rama with clarity and detail."

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Shrunu de`vi pravakshyaami guhyaad guhyataram mahat,

adhyaatmaraamacharitam raame`nokttam puraa mama. 2. 4

Tadadya kathayishyaami shrunu taapatrayaapaham,

yachchhrutvaa muchyate` janturagnaanotthamahaabhayaat,

praapnoti paramaamriddhim deerghaayuh putrasantatim. 2. 5

Shri Mahadevji said, "Devi, listen! I will describe the greatest of mystic secrets about the Mahat-Tattva to you. This is the charitra of the adhyatma Rama."'

When a charitra is described, it is in a straightforward manner. Shri Udiya Babaji Maharaj used to say that if a description of a vritti, mana and ahankara is to be asked for, it should be clearly mentioned. That means, this is the vritti, and it was wedded to the Atma, and used to kill kama, krodha, lobha, and ahankara, etc.

The basic thing is that what is outside is also inside. The *samashti* – collective – is also in the *vyashti* – single unit. This is called '*adhidaiva*'. The '*adhibhoota*' is what is outside, and the '*adhyaatma*' is what is within. The three – adhidaiva, adhibhoota and adhyatma – go together.

'"Come, I will tell you the whole adhyatma Rama-charit," said Mahadevji. "Rama told me about it Himself. Listening to this destroys all the three kinds of taapa."'

Removing dukha is the task of the Shastras. It is not the task of the Shastras to give wealth! The Shastras will not arrange a marriage for you, nor will it bring money for you. The task of the Shastras is to destroy your dukha, your worries, and the agitation that is in the mana of the manushya.

Gnan is for removing agnan, not for shifting things from one place to another. No matter what the cause of the dukha may be – somebody's death, being insulted, lightening striking, the house catching fire, meeting or parting with people, etc – dukha is always in the mana.

The dukha of physical pain is adhibhautik, the dukha of a natural disaster is adhidaivik, and adhyatmik dukha is when you have the kalpana in your mana

that somebody is your friend and somebody is your foe. Thus there are three causes of dukha but the swarup of dukha is one, and dukha is always experienced in the mana.

The upadesh of Mahatmas is not to prevent lightening from striking your house, or save you from physical pain. The upadesh of the Shastras is for lifting up your mana – which has fallen into dukha in such a way that it becomes dukhi for small, insignificant things.

That, which some people call 'bad', is not bad. That mana is bad in which bad inclinations come. The bad inclinations must stop coming. It is no use wanting the good and bad in the sansara to stop. How can that every happen? Just understand that there is nothing good and nothing bad in this world – it is the one Parameshwara who is doing all kinds of leela. Then, all the dukha – *agnaanotthamahaabhayaat* – a great bhaya has come into you because of agnan.

This bhaya is removed by listening to this katha of the Adhyatma Rama, and a manushya becomes sukhi. He gets supreme success, a long life, sons and descendants, and all his worldly desires are fulfilled. If the mana becomes pavitra and sukhi, he can obtain everything!

Bhoomirbhaare`na magnaa dashavadanamukhaashe`sharakshoganaanaam,

dhritvaa goroopamaadau divijamunijanaih saakamabjaasanasya,

gatvaa lokam rudantee vyasanamupagatam brahmane` praaha sarva,

brahmaa dhyaatvaa muhoortam sakalamapi hridaave`dashe`shaatmatvaat. 2. 6

Tasmaatksheerasamudrateeramagamad brahmaatha de`vairvrito,

de`vyaa chaakhilalokahritsthamajaram sarvagnameesham harim,

astausheechchhrutisiddhanirmalapadaih stotraih puraanodbhavairbhakttyaa gadgatayaa giraativimalairaanandavaashpairvritah. 2. 7

The Prithivi is a Devta. Devpuja is done before building a house or a pavilion for a marriage ceremony. In our family it was a tradition that the marriage mandap

was put up on bamboos put in the ground. This becomes the property of the bridegroom when the marriage ceremony is completed.

What is the bride's family to do? The cost of the mandap is given to the bridegroom, and the ground it is built on remains with the bride's family.

This Prithivi belongs to Bhagwan. It becomes overburdened by an excess of wicked people. The Brahman is pure satta – there is no burden on the Brahman. However, when a manushya is filled with ahankara, the ahankara weighs down the Atma. In the same way, the bhoomi – this earth – is the form of satta. When there is a great increase of people who have ahankara its burden is increased intolerably. Ahankara is *bhaara* – it weighs down the Prithivi. It is a burden.

Ravana says, 'this Prithivi is mine.' Ravana means a person, the very sight of whom makes people cry. 'Oh Bhagwan! Who knows what he will do; let us run away from our village and save ourselves from him!' Some people say that Ravana depicts maha-moha, great wrongs done by deluded thinking. Ravana is a name for agnan.

Moha dasamauli tadbhraataa ahankara.

Tulsidasji has written that Ravana is a ten-headed personification of moha, and ahankara is his brother.

Ravana is called 'dasavadan' because he had ten faces. He was engrossed in indulging in bhoga with all ten indriyas. He is Shri Rama's enemy because a person fully wrapped up in bhoga forgets the Paramatma. The Ishwara is pushed to the background and bhoga becomes his priority.

Dashrath means a person who uses his ten indriyas like a chariot, keeping them under control. He becomes Rama's father. Rama is created through him.

'The Prithivi had sunk low with the weight of Ravana and the Rakshasas who were his companions. She assumed the form of a cow and went to Brahmaji, with the Devtas and Munis. She wept as she told Brahmaji about her suffering. Brahmaji did dhyana and understood her plight – *sakalamapi hridaave`dashe`shaatmakatvaat.'*

Actually, how do we become aware of our dukha? A person who understands this also understands how others feel dukha. A person who does not understand how he gets dukha cannot understand the dukha of other people.

This is why it is said:

Shruyataam dharmasarvasvam shrutvaa chaapyavadhaaryataam.

The rahasya of Dharma is: listen to the essence of Dharma and adhere to it.

Aatmanah pratikoolaani pare`sham na samaachare`t – when you feel dukha because somebody has insulted you, you should not insult anybody. When you feel dukha that somebody did your ninda, you should not speak ill of anybody. You should guard yourself from doing anything that causes dukha to anybody; you cannot stop anybody from saying what they want.

'Brahmaji went to the shore of the Ksheerasagar.'

Ksheera means milk and sagar means sea. Milk gives nourishment. It is Sattva guna where everybody gets nourishment and satisfaction. The Ksheerasagar is an ocean of Sattvikta, and the Ishwara is there in a form that is manifest.

'Brahma, the Devtas and Prithivi all went to the shore of the Ksheerasagar and did prarthana to the Parameshwara.'

Where does the Parameshwara stay?

Akhila lokahritsthamajaram sarvagnameesham harim.

That Paramatma is seated in the hriday of every being. He is ajara and sarvagna. He is the Parameshwara, but He is not evident. His light is seen where Sattvaguna is.

'Brahmaji did Bhagwan's stuti with verses that were in keeping with the statements of the Shrutis.'

Very few people know this – when a person recites a poem he has written, the person eulogized in the poem is not what he savors in his hriday. What he actually savors is the skill and beauty of his composition, because he has mamata for the poem he has created.

Nija kavitta ke`hi laaga na neekaa, sarasa hohu athavaa ati feekaa.

(Who doesn't like his own poem, whether it is sweet or not?)

People enjoy their own poetry, music, singing, etc because they are attached to what they create, not because it is about the Ishwara. Therefore, the vani that is siddha since time immemorial, given in the ancient writings, and the Shrutis written by great Mahatmas are those that arouse prema for Bhagwan. When these are used for eulogizing Bhagwan the feeling of Aham does not arise. Ahankara hides Bhagwan as soon as it arises. When we do Bhagwan's stuti with the Veda-vani it does not give rise to ahankara.

Another point that should be kept in mind is that generally, the hriday of most people is not free of vasanas. Everybody has some desires. The desires may be few or they may be many, but they are present in the hriday. When a manushya begins to describe the Ishwara, he attributes to the Ishwara the qualities that appeal to him, in the Ishwara's appearance and actions. Thus, only a person who is free of ahankara and vasanas can describe the Parameshwara without bias. Only the Vedas – the apaurusheya Gnan that does not belong to any manushya – can describe Him objectively. The Gnan of the Puranas is also apaurusheya.

'Brahmaji did Bhagwan's stuti. His voice was choked with prema.'

Look, in *'praarthanaa'*, *praar* comes first. In English it becomes 'prayer'. Prarthana is not our entire Dharma; it is the name of a part of our Dharma. Prarthana is of four kinds.

1. Expressing dejection and humility.
2. Having bodha about Bhagwan's mahatmya.
3. Expressing longing for Bhagwan.
4. Expressing dependence on Bhagwan.

In the first, the bhakta admits his faults and failings. Acceptance of his paapa-taapa is the first part of prarthana. Mahatmya bodha is the second part of a prarthana. The bhakta says that he accepts any punishment for his wrong-doings, but 'I don't know how long it will take, Prabhu, so please pardon me. You are very magnanimous. You are mahan! What is the significance of my offence in Your drishti?' The bhakta shifts the focus from his lapse to the Bhagwan's innumerable gunas.

What happens is that the focus is changed. We feel depraved and downfallen because of our durgunas and doshas. When the focus is shifted to Bhagwan's gunas it gives us the hope of being forgiven.

Abhilaashaa is the third part of prarthana. Abhilasha means longing. 'He Bhagwan! When will the day come when I will talk and laugh with You, play with You, sit in Your lap and merge into You?' There should be a longing for Bhagwan.

Nirbhartaa is the fourth part of prarthana. It means to depend totally on Bhagwan and Bhagwan alone. It is to keep quiet, not ask for anything. The Paramatma is not an agnani who needs to be told about your problem. He is neither hard-hearted nor callous. It is not that He waits for us to ask for forgiveness before forgiving us. Nor is He a tightfisted miser who will give something only if we beg or pester Him for it!

Then?

'Do what You want, Prabhu! I am totally dependent on You.'

These are the four aspects of prarthana accepted by the Shastras.

'Brahmaji did Bhagwan's stuti in a voice that was choked with bhakti. Tears of prema flowed from his eyes. His body thrilled with ecstasy.'

Emotion affects the shareer. Isn't your shareer affected when you get angry? Your eyes redden, you frown, and your face turns red. If the anger is very strong your face becomes black. Your hands and feet begin to tremble. The speech becomes uncontrolled. A bad bhava like anger has an effect on your shareer. Then, how can your shareer remain unaffected if you have an excellent bhava in your mana? A person becomes excited when kama comes into his mana. His mouth begins to water if he feels like eating lemon pickle. Every bhava has an effect on the shareer. Is bhakti-bhava so weak that your shareer remains unaffected when it comes into your hriday? Bhakti-bhava has to have an effect on you. What is the use of an arid jeevan without bhakti?

Tatah sfuratsahastraamshusahastrasadrishaprabhah,

aaviraaseeddharih praachyaam dishaam vyapanayamstamah. 2. 8

Kathamchiddrishtavaanbrahmaa durdarshamakritaatmanaam,

indraneelaprateekaasham smitaasyam padmalochanam. 2. 9

Kireetahaarake`yurakundalaih katakaadibhih,

vibhraajamaanam shreevatsakaustubhaprabhayaanvitam. 2. 10

Stuvadbhih sanakaadyaishcha paarshadaih parive`shitam,

shankhachakragadaapadmavanamaalaaviraajitam. 2. 11

Svarnayagnopaveete`na svarnavarnaambare`na cha,

shriyaa bhoomyaa cha sahitam garudopari sansthitam. 2. 12

Harshagadgadayaa vaachaa stotum samupachakrame`. 2. 13

'The result of Brahmaji's stuti was that the Paramatma's prakash illuminated Brahmaji's hriday in the form of the stuti.'

This is called the *'naama'* – Bhagwan's name. *'Naamaani kritaa abhivadan yadaaste`.'* Bhagwan Himself creates His name, and sings it! Therefore the stuti of the Parameshwara, His name, sentences about Him, and the Mahavakyas manifest first, and their meaning manifests after that. The naam comes first and is followed by the roop.

The adhishthana of the naam-roop is neither manifest nor invisible. It is *aatmatve`na saakshaat aparoksha* – meaning, it is a direct personal experience of the Atma within. For an agnani it is *nitya paroksha* – meaning, it is always unperceived. For a Gnani it is *nitya aparoksha* – always perceived.

When words about Bhagwan come they bring His roop into the hriday. Bhagwan's manifesting is like the rising of a hundred suns. All darkness disappears.

Where did Bhagwan manifest?

He manifested in the east – *praachyaam dishaa,* meaning, 'in front'. We face the east when we do the ritual of the Sandhya Vandan every morning, because the sun rises in the east. In the same way, the Paramatma stands before our eyes. Prachi disha means 'before our eyes'. The *prateechee dishaa* – the west, is within.

Bhagwan Shri Krishna manifested in Mathura and vanished in Dwarka. Dwarka is to the west of Mathura. His *tirobhaava* – vanishing – was in the Prabhas Kshetra, which is in the Pratichi disha, and His appearing was in the Prachi disha, in Mathura. He appeared in the east and disappeared in the west.

Where is the *poorva-pashchim* (east-west) in our shareer?

See it for yourself. What is before your eyes in the east and what is behind you in the west?

'A divine form appeared, which dispelled all darkness. Brahmaji got a glimpse of that form.'

This is a roop that can only be seen by a person who has control over his mana and indriyas. If a manushya's mana rushes about erratically, and his indriyas want to grab vishays all the time, how will he get a darshan of the Paramatma?

There is no reason to doubt that darshan is obtained by anyone who is qualified to get it. A person who gets Bhagwan's darshan in his hriday also gets it with his eyes. Eyes are like spectacles; what we see inside can be seen outside as well. If it is possible to do dhyana of the Ishwara with our inner eyes, it is also possible to get His darshan with our outer eyes. There is no reason to doubt this.

'Brahmaji saw a form. It was blue, like a sapphire.'

'Neela' means blue like the akash. The akash is not really blue, but it looks blue when we try to see it. This Paramatma also manifests in a blue form.

'Anand sparkled in His smile.'

'*Padmalochana* – His eyes were like freshly bloomed lotus flowers. His face was like a lotus. He was wearing a crown, armlets, a long garland, dangling ear rings, and other ornaments. The divine jewel called the 'Kaustubh Mani' shone at His throat, spreading light in all directions. The little circlet of golden hair on His chest, called the 'Shrivatsa' glinted enticingly. Sanakadi and other Rishis were doing His stuti. In His four hands He held His Shankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma. A golden Yagnopaveet hung on His shoulder. His garments were golden yellow. He manifested with Shridevi and Bhoodevi.'

Some people call themselves 'Laxmipati' or 'Bhupati' because they have great wealth or a lot of land. They cannot bring it into their mana nor remove it from their mana. Both are false. Shridevi (Laxmiji) and Bhudevi (the Prithivi) mean that all movable and immovable wealth is Bhagwan's. Laxmiji laughs when a man boasts about his wealth. 'I belong to Narayana. The foolish man is proud about his wealth. His abhiman will soon be broken.'

And, when people fight over land saying, 'I am the swami of this dharati,' Dharati Mata laughs. 'His father and grandfather said the same thing! His sons and grandsons will also say the same thing. The manushyas are my sons, and they call themselves the pati of the bhoomi!'

Oh! Do seva of your mother, my brother! Don't exploit her. It is paapa to do bhoga of the mother you should revere.

The earning of Laxmi, the earning of the dharati, the manufacture of cloth, iron etc are all for the seva of Janardan, not for your own pleasure. When this viewpoint is lost both Laxmi and Bhudevi give a slap. If somebody considers the Parameshwara's patni to be a source of his own pleasure, he will not be spared by Laxmi or by Bhudevi!

'Bhagwan manifested, along with Shridevi and Bhudevi, seated on Garudaji.'

Some people feel, 'let Bhagwan manifest in the mana first. Then I will do His stuti.' This reminds me of a conference held at Allahabad long ago. I was living in Jhusi at that time. As far as I remember, this was in 1935 or 1936. Girijashankar Bajpayi was the President of the Conference. At that time he was a Judge in the Allahabad High Court. Later he was made the Governor of Uttar Pradesh. C. B. Chintamani and Dr. Pannalal were assistants of the then Governor of U.P. Mahamahopadhyaya Pundit Ganganath, Ishwarasharanji Jha, Pundit Ganganath, and several other vidvans had attended the conference.

One speaker said, 'Bhagwan's naam gives fruit when a person whose hriday is shuddha says it. If the hriday is not shuddha, what fruit will the person get?'

A little later another speaker spoke about this comment. He said, 'it is true that Bhagwan's naam should be taken by people whose hriday is shuddha, but how

does the hriday become shuddha? Please explain this! Is the hriday made shuddha with a hammer and chisel?'

The fact is that it is necessary to first utter the shabda, for bhava to come into the hriday. When you do Bhagwan's stuti, and absorb His name, do some kriya to please Him, a divine stream will begin to flow in your hriday, cleansing it of the impurities it is filled with, and making it shuddha. Send this stream into your hriday first, at least!

One opinion is that the thirst will be quenched when the water stored in the dharati will come up on its own.

No! Send for axes and spades and workmen and set them to digging for water. Connect a pipe to bring the water up. The water is there, but you have to work to get it.

You have to do stuti. Bhagwan comes, riding on the shabda. He goes into your ears and then settles in your hriday. Garudaji symbolizes the shabda. So, take Bhagwan's naam, eulogize Him, and listen to His katha. He will come into your hriday.

Brahmovaacha

Natoasmi te` padam de`va praanabuddheendriyaatmabhih,

yachchintyate` karmapaashaaddhridi nityam mumukshubhih. 2. 14

Maayayaa gunamayyaa tvam srijasyavasi lumpasi,

jagatte`na na te` le`pa aanandaanubhavaatmanah. 2. 15

Tathaa shuddhirna dushtaanaam daanaadhyayanakarmabhih,

shuddhaatmataa te` yashasi sadaa bhakttimataam yathaa. 2. 16

'Brahmaji did Bhagwan's stuti. "The people who want to be free of the bandhan of Karma do Your chintan every day in their hriday. They think about how You use Your Maya to create the srishti, sthiti, and pralay. They meditate on how You are the *aanandaanubhavaatmaa* – the Atma that is the anubhav of anand."'

Tathaa shuddhirna dushtaanaam – this is also given in the Bhagwat. Those whose mana is wicked –

Mohi kapata chhala chhidra na bhaavaa, niramala mana jana so mohi paavaa.

(Bhagwan Rama said, 'I don't like deceit, trickery and such doshas. Only a person whose mana is nirmal obtains Me'.)

People whose hriday is filled with wickedness may do a lot of daan, study the Shastras, or do great deeds, but their hriday will not become shuddha by these activities. Only when shraddha and bhakti for Bhagwan arises does the hriday become shuddha.

Atastavaanghrirme` drishtashchittadoshaapanuttaye`,

sadyoantarhridaye` nityam munibhih saatvatairvritah. 2. 17

Brahmaadyaih svaarthasiddhyarthamasmaabhih poorvase`vitah,

aparokshaanubhootyartham gnaanibhirhridi bhaavitah. 2. 18

Tavaangripoojaanirmaalyatulaseemaalayaa vibho,

spardhate` vakshasi padam labdhvaapi shreeh sapatnivat. 2. 19

Atastvatpaadabhaktte`shu tava bhakttih shriyoadhikaa,

bhakttime`vaabhivaanchhanti tvadbhakttaah saarave`dinah. 2. 20

Atastvatpaadakamale` bhakttire`va sadaastu me`,

sansaaramayataptaanaam bhe`shajam bhakttire`va te`. 2. 21

Iti bruvantam brahmaanam babhaashe` bhagavaan harih,

kim karomeeti tam ve`dhaah pratyuvaachaatiharshitah. 2. 22

Bhagavaan raavano naama paulastyatanayo mahaan,

raakshasaanaamadhipatirmaddattavaradarpitah. 2. 23

Trilokeem lokapaalaanshcha baadhate` vishvabaadhakah,

maanushe`na mritistasya mayaa kalyaana kalpita,

atastvam maanusho bhootvaa jahi de`varipum prabho. 2. 24

Shreebhagavaanuvaacha

Kashyapasya varo dattastapasaa toshite`na me`. 2. 25

Yaachitah putrabhaavaaya tathte`tyangeekritam mayaa,

sa idaaneem dasharatho bhootvaa tishthati bhootale`. 2. 26

Tasyaaham putrataame`tya kausalyaayaam shubhe` dine`,

chaturdhaatmaaname`vaaham srijaameetarayoh prithak. 2. 27

Yogamaayaapi seete`ti janakasya grihe` tadaa,

utpatsyate` tayaa saardhyam sarvam sampaadayaamyaham,

ityuktvaantardadhe` vishnurbrahmaa de`vaanathaabraveet. 2. 28

Brahmovacha

Vishnurmaanusharoope`na bhavishyati raghoh kule`. 2. 29

Yooyam srijadhvam sarve`api vaanare`shvanshambhavaan,

vishnoh sahaayam kuruta yaavatsthaasyati bhootale`. 2. 30

Iti de`vaansamaadishya samaashvaasya cha me`dineem,

yayau brahmaa svabhavanam vijvarah sukhamaasthitah. 2. 31

De`vaashcha sarve` hariroopadhaarinah sthitaah sahaayaarthamitastato hare`h,

mahaabalaah parvatavrikshayodhinah prateekshamaanaa bhagavantameeshvaram. 2, 32

‘”I have got the darshan of Your lotus-feet and so, the doshas of my chitta are removed,” said Brahmaji. “Great people of the Satvat vansha, Vaishnavas, and Rishi-Munis do Your dhyana in their hriday. I and the other Devtas have always done Your seva to attain our desires. Gnanis do Your seva to get an aparoksha sakshatkara of You in their hriday.”’

One point to keep in mind is that Bhagwan is pratyksha in the form of this jagat. This jagat is evident to all. It is no other than Bhagwan in a form you can perceive with your indriyas. Take a hundreds oaths, and decide for once and for all, that everything you see is the swarup of the Parameshwara. There is nothing good and nothing bad about it.

Even if you are inclined to do raaga-dvesha, where does it go? It flows away! If raaga and dvesha remain active, can a person sleep peacefully? How will dreams come if your mana is filled with raaga-dvesha? How will you think about others? Thus, raaga-dvesha etc are a false play of the mana, shown by the bhram of the mana, and come into our hriday and hide in it.

To experience Bhagwan in a pratyaksha roop, remember that all this is the Paramatma. Have vishvas that this jagat is His pratyaksha roop. He is vyapak, like the akash, lives in Vaikuntha, Goloka, and other realms, and His aparoksha roop is the Paramatma in the Atma. Gnanis experience Him in these forms.'

Nirmaalya means the items left over after a puja is done.

'"The nirmalya of Your lotus feet is Your tulsi mala. Even Laxmiji is eager to get it."'

It is difficult to get Bhagwan's mala even for Laxmiji!

'"Therefore, those who have bhakti for Your lotus-charan, Your bhakti is even more precious than Laxmiji's bhakti – *saarvave`dee* bhaktas want only Your bhakti, because they know it is the best thing."'

Sarvave`dee means a Brahmin who is well-versed in the Vedas. This is why Brahmaji said, 'He Prabho! May I always have bhakti for Your charan-kamal.'

Bhagwan's bhakti is the only way people can be saved from being burnt by the ailments of this sansara.

Look; the description of Shankarji came first, and now Brahmaji was included. Vishnu Bhagwan has manifested as Rama and is speaking to Brahmaji.

'Bhagwan asked, "Brahmaji, what do you want – *kim karomeeti?* I am ready to do whatever you want."

Brahmaji felt very pleased. He said, “He Bhagwan! Pulastya Rishi’s son, Vishrava, has a son called Ravana.

Bhagavan raavano naama paulastyatanayaam mahaan.

He is very famous; he is the Raja of the Rakshasas. I have given him a vara which has made him very arrogant.”’

The fact is, when a manushya obtains all kinds of vishays he feels, ‘I have done this and I have done that,’ and feels elated.

Hrishto dripyati dripto dharmamati kraamati.

Veda Bhagwan says, ‘a person feels elated when he gets all kinds of worldly riches. He feels that nobody can compare with him. He becomes conceited and arrogant. And – *dripto dharmam atikraamati* – he transgresses Dharma.’

What can anybody do? When a person becomes fearless he becomes brash and starts doing bad things. If he has abhiman about his wealth he spends lakhs of rupees on the wrong kinds of deeds. He feels, ‘what can anybody do to me? It is my money and I will use it as I please!’ If he has abhiman about his strength he feels, ‘I will beat up the weak.’ The fact is that it is abhiman that gives dukha.

Raakshasaanaamadhipatirmaddattavaradarpitah.

Brahmaji gave a varadaan – he gave a boon to Ravana, and Ravana became extremely conceited and cruel.

Trilokeem lokapaalaanshcha baadhate` vishvabaadhakah.

‘“This Ravana gives dukha to the whole world. He gave dukha to the rulers of the different realms of all the three lokas.”

“So why have you come to Me, Brahmaji? It is you who gave Ravana the vara.”

“Maharaj, I gave Ravana the vara that he will be killed at the hands of a manushya. Now, Prabhu, You must become a manushya and kill him.”’

Brahmaji doesn’t do the work of destruction. He is everybody’s father. He felt that the task of destruction is Shankarji’s, but Shankarji is moody. He won’t bother to kill anybody unless he feels like it.

These moody people are also very strange! They do the work in time if they are in the mood to do it, else, the work remains not done.

'Brahmaji told Vishnu Bhagwan, "Shankar Bhagwan will not kill Ravana just now, and I have given him the varadaan. After all, Ravana is also my child; how can I kill him with my own hands?

Atastvam maanusho bhootvaa jahi de`varipum prabho.

You please assume the roop of a manushya, Prabhu, and kill the enemy of the Devtas."'

It seems to us that we are giving sukha to our mana and indriyas through our ahankara, but this is a fallacy. Ahankara is the enemy of our own mana, and also of our indriyas. Ahankara is *de`va-ripu* – the enemy of the Devtas. Our indriyas are Devtas.

De`vaanaam guna lingaanaamaanushravika karmanaam.

'Bhagwan said, "you gave Ravana the vara that he would be killed at the hands of a manushya and no other."'

What happened is that Ravana had asked that he should never die. Brahmaji told him, 'whoever is born has to die. That is the rule.'

Jo baraa so butaanaa, jo faraa so jharaa.

(That which is lit goes out; that which buds, ripens and falls.)

'"Every being that is born has to die one day," said Brahmaji. 'I cannot give you a vara that you will never die. There has to be a nimitta for your death."

Ravana said, "in that case, let my death be at the hands of a manushya. These men and monkeys are food for us Rakshasas. They are like grass and straw for us. I don't ask for a vara about them – they are too puny to do me any harm." Ravana considered the *nara-vaanara* – men and monkeys – insignificant. He disdained them as not worth bothering about. And, the monkeys came to destroy him.

Brahma tam paraasaadyoanyatraatmano brahma ve`da kshatram tam paraadaadyoanyantraatmanah kshatram ve`da. (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 2. 4. 6)

If you consider a Brahmin, Kshatriya, Devta, the Lokas, and the Vedas to be inferior to yourself, and disdain them, they will become your enemy.

Nobody should be considered an enemy and be insulted. Remember, it is said that an ant can kill an elephant. I have not seen this, but I have heard that if an ant climbs into an elephant's trunk and starts to bite, the elephant tries to blow it out at first. When it clings to the skin inside the trunk the elephant thrashes its trunk, but in vain, and it dies ultimately. The ant does not die. So, you should never disdain anybody as being weak and ineffective.

'"Ravana disdained the nara-vanar," said Brahmaji. "So please come as a manushya and kill him."

Bhagwan said, "you gave Ravana the vara, but you are giving Me a different kind of vara – *kashyapasya varo dattastapasaa toshite`na me`* - I gave a vara to Kashyap because I was pleased with his tapasya. He asked me to become his son."'

You know that Kashyap is the son of Marichi, and Marichi is the son of Brahma and Brahma is the son of Narayana. Thus, Narayana is the origin of the lineage. Narayana is not before our eyes, but Bhagwan should come before our eyes. And so, Kashyap asked Bhagwan Vishnu for the varadaan, 'Maharaj, don't remain in the old generation; become a son in the future generation.' Bhagwan accepted his wish.

'"Now, Kashyapji is on this prithivi as Dashrath, and I will be born at an auspicious moment to his wife, Kausalya. I will manifest in four forms," said Bhagwan.'

These four forms are actually the Upanishads.

Just as the Mandukya Upanishad has four forms, this is also an Upanishad. Rama is Turiya, Bharat is Pragna, Lakshman is Taijas and Shatrughna is Hiranyagarbha.

Shri Goswamiji has also given an indication of this:

Nija vibhuna saha chaariu avasthaa – all four states manifest with the Paramatma's all-pervading form. The Pancharatna calls this the *chakravyuh* – a four-sided formation – Vasudev, Sankarshan, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha. You won't find a description of this in the Upanishads, or the basic mantras of the Vedas. This is the secret of the Pancharatnas. Vasudev, Sankarshan, Pradyumna and Aniruddha are the secrets of the Upanishads. All four appear in them.

'"Yoga-Maya Sita is born in the house of Janak. With her help I will accomplish all this," said Bhagwan.

Vishnu Bhagwan vanished after saying this. Brahmaji told the Devtas, "Devtas! Bhagwan Himself will be born in the Raghukula as a manushya. All of you take birth on the prithivi as vanars, along with some of your powers, to help Bhagwan Vishnu." '

That means, the Devtas did not get Bhagwan's darshan. Nor did they hear His voice. Brahmaji got Bhagwan's darshan and heard Him. Of what use are the indriyas if there is no antahkarana? The hriday is needed for the Paramatma's bhakti, preeti, and darshan.

Bhagwan Vishnu delayed His coming as Shri Ramachandra. The vanars came much before His Avatar. If we try to calculate Jambavan's age, we find he was born a very long time before Rama. It is the same with Hanumanji and other Avatars. They did not manifest on earth after Brahmaji's adesh. The vanars were already there when they were born, with an excess of the powers of the Devtas. Brahmaji and Shankarji also came somewhere in-between, to do what they could, to help Vishnu.

The meaning is that they all wanted to contribute to help the samashti achieve what it wanted. The svabhava of Mahatmas is the same.

One Mahatma was in a boat that started a leak. The boatman began to bail out water with a bucket as fast as he could, but the Mahatma kept filling water from the river in his kamandalu and pour it into the boat. 'What are you doing, Baba?' cried the boat man. 'Please stop this!'

The Mahatma made no reply. He continued adding water to the water inside the boat. After some time the boatman managed to plug the hole and avert the

danger of the boat sinking. The Mahatma began to help him empty out the water in the boat.

'Babaji, first you were helping the boat to sink, and now you are helping to make it safe!' said the boatman. 'Why?'

'When the Ishwara was filing the boat with water, I did what I could to help Him,' said the Mahatma. 'Now He wants to save the boat, I am doing what I can to help Him in this. I am the servant of the Ishwara. Both my hands are raised up – whatever He does is good. It is not my job to find fault with what He decides.'

'Brahmaji ordered the Devtas to go to the prithivi and went back to his realm, Brahmaloka. He felt sanguine. The Devtas came to the prithivi as vanars, waiting for Rama to be born and extend their help to Him.

The one who offers oblations in a Yagna is one who merges his sankalpa into Bhagwan's sankalpa, and gives his support to whatever Bhagwan does.

And, one who insists on his own sankalpa – meaning, he says, 'Behariji!'

'Yes?'

'I want a son.'

'Very well, My brother.'

'I want to get a son within one year, Maharaj!'

'All right.'

'Look, Maharaj; my son should be healthy and obedient and clever. Please bring me such a son within one year.'

Who are you talking to, my friend – the Ishwara, or to a servant? You want even the Ishwara to do what you want! Bhaktas know how the Guru, Shastras, and the Ishwara have to be cared about. Those who help the Ishwara in His work have been very powerful.

Baal Kanda

The Third Sarga.

The leela of Bhagwan's janma.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Atha raajaa dasharathah shreemaansatyaparaayanah,

ayodhyaadhipatirveerah sarvaloke`shu vishrutah. 3. 1

Soanapatyantvadukhe`na peedito gurume`kadaa,

vasishtham svakulaachaaryamabhivaadyodamabraveet. 3. 2

Svaaminputraa katham me` syuh sarvalakshanalakshitaah,

putraheenasya me` raajyam sarvam dukhaaya kalpate`. 3. 3

Tatoabraveedvasishthastam bhavishyanti sutaastava,

chatvaarah sattvasampannaa lokapaalaa ivaaparaah. 3. 4

Shaantaabhartaaramaaneeya rishyashringam tapodhanam,

asmaabhih sahitah putrakaame`shtim sheeghramaachara. 3. 5

Tathe`ti munimaaneeya mantribhih sahitah shuchih,

yagnakarma samaare`bhe` munibhirveetakalmashaih. 3. 6

Shraddhayaa hooyamaane`agnau taptajaamboonadaprabhah,

paayasam svarnapaatrastham griheetvovaach havyavaat. 3. 7

Dashrath's vansha is the Raghuvansha. This lineage of Raghu is superior in every way – in learning, in Yoga, Dharma, daan, etc. Raghu had done so much daan that he was left with nothing but the clothes he wore. When a Brahmin came he did not have even a copper plate for washing the Brahmin's feet; he had to use a clay vessel.

‘The vansha of Raghu was so pavitra that its sons brought Gangaji down to the dharati. They pleased Shankarji with their tapasya. Vasishthaji lifted the vansha to include the Ishwara by making it shuddha and giving Rama to Dashrath as his son.

Dashrathji had no sons. He went to his Guruji and bowed down to him. “Maharaj,” he said, “I want not one, but many sons; and they should all have sadgunas. My Rajya is vast, but I feel dukha that I don’t have any sons. “

Vasishthaji told him, “I am able to see the future. Brahmaji has won Bhagwan Vishnu’s consent.”’

Vasishthaji is Brahmaji’s son. He is preparing Dashrathji.

‘”You will have four sons. They will have great strength. They will be men who are rich with Sattvaguna, and be natural rulers. Send for Rishyashringa, the husband of Shanta, who has done great tapasya. I will join him in doing a Kameshthi Yagna, along with other Brahmins, for fulfilling your desire to get sons.”’

This episode is given in great detail, over many chapters, in the Valmiki Ramayana.

‘The Muni came. The Yagna was done with great pavitrata. The other Brahmins who participated in the Yagna were also nishpaapa.’

It is not that the Brahmins were chosen at random without consideration of learning or pavitrata. There are Brahmins who don’t even know the correct enunciation of the Gayatri Mantra. They don’t do the mandatory daily ritual of Sandhya Vandan. No such *braahamanabroova* were used. The word *braahamanabroova* is used for such unworthy Brahmins.

Yathaakaashtamayo hasti yathaacharmamayo mrigah,

yashcha viproanadheeyaanastrayaste` naama vibhrati.

My Guruji used to say, *braahmanabroovah ityapi na paryaaptaarthah shabdah* – even this word is not adequate to describe such Brahmins. People say, ‘a wooden elephant’. They call it an elephant but it is made of wood. They say, ‘a leather deer’. They call it a deer but it is made of leather. In the same way, a

Brahmin who does not have sadachar and vidya is not an adhikari for being called a Brahmin.'

What kind of Muni came?

Veetakalmasha – the Muni had no dosha.

'He did havan in the agni with great shraddha. Agni Devta manifested when the oblations were poured into the sacred fire. His form was the color of gold. He held a gold vessel in his hands. The vessel was filled with payas. He told Dashrathji, "Take this payas. It is obtained only by the Ishwara's kripa. By this, you will get sons.

Grihaana paayasa divyam putreeyam de`vanirmitam,

lapsyase` paramaatmaanam putratve`na na sanshayah. 3. 8

Ityuktvaa paaysam dattvaa raagne` soantardadhe`analah,

vavande` munishaardoolau raajaa labdhamanorathah. 3. 9

Vasishtharishyashringaabhayymanugnaato dadau havih,

kausalyaa sakaike`yyai ardhamardham prayatnatah. 3. 10

Tatah sumitraa sampraaptaa jagrighnuh pautrikam charum,

kausalyaa tu svabhaagaardham dadau tasyai mudaanvitaa. 3. 11

Kaike`yee cha svabhaagaardham dadau preetisamanvitaah,

upbhajyu charum sarvaah striyo garbhanvitaah. 3. 12

The Paramatma will come to you as your son."'

That means, 'the Paramatma will come to you so that you can savor the vatsalya-rasa. For the people there will be the veer-rasa – dayaa-veer and daan-veer. Bhagwan will be a very compassionate and do great daan.'

'Agni Devta vanished after saying this. Raja Dashrath praised Vasishthaji and Rishyashringa. After taking their permission he distributed the divine havishya, giving half each to Kausalya and Kaikeyi. Sumitra came there just then. Kausalya and Kaikeyi both gave her a portion of their payas. As a result, Sumitra got two

sons. The wives who were given payas by Dashrath got one son each, but Sumitra got two sons.'

Bharatji is Bhagwan's dasa, His servitor; and Shatrughnaji is the *daasaanudaasa* – the dasa of Bhagwan's dasa Bharatji. Lakshmanji always follows Bhagwan. 'Lakshman' means, a symbol. Lakshmanji is where Ramji is. If you want to find Lakshmanji you will also find Ramji.

'All three queens drank the payas. They all became pregnant. They looked beautiful, like Devtas.

De`vataa iva re`justaah svabhaasaa raajamandire`,

dashame` maasi kausalyaa sushuve` putramadbhutam. 3. 13

Madhumaase` site` pakshe` navamyaam kakarkate` shubha`,

punarvasvrikshasahite` uchchasthe` grahapanchake`. 3. 14

Me`sham pooshani sampraapte` pushpavrishtisamaakule`,

aaviraaseejjagannaathah paramaatmaa sanaatanah. 3. 15

The word 'kausalya' is pronounced as *kausalyaa* and also as *kaushalyaa*. It is described that there was a small village called 'Kosal' close to Ayodhya. Dashrathji was attracted to Kausalya, who lived there, and her father gave her hand to Dashrath in marriage.

Before this event, there is a description that Ravana went to Brahmaji. 'Maharaj, please tell me who the person is, at whose hands I am to die,' he said.

Brahmaji told him, 'a son will be born to Kausalya and Dashrath. You will die at his hands.'

'Who is Kausalya?'

'She is a maiden who lives in the village called Kosal.'

'Who is Dashrath?'

'He is the Raja of Ayodhya. These two will get married and Bhagwan will be born as their son, in the form of Rama. He will kill you.'

Ravana said, ‘I will not let the marriage take place.’ He went to Kosal and kidnapped Kausalya. He also kidnapped Dashrath. He put them inside strong boxes separately, and threw the boxes into the sea. He gave a fish the responsibility to take care of the boxes.

A larger fish came and fought with the fish Ravana had entrusted with the boxes. The boxes slipped out from the mouth of the smaller fish and flowed away with the tide.

Ravana went to Brahmaji many days after that. He said, ‘Maharaj, at whose hands will I die now?’

‘I have already told you,’ said Brahmaji. ‘The son of Kausalya and Dashrath will kill you.’

Ravana said, ‘I have thrown them both into the sea in separate boxes,’ said Ravana. They are both dead.’

‘They are not dead,’ said Brahmaji. ‘They have got married.’

What had happened is that the boxes landed on a beach and some fishermen opened the boxes. Dashrath came out of one box and Kausalya from the other. Both were alive. Brahmaji came there and got them married.

After Brahmaji went back, Ravana came to him and asked this question. He was shocked when Brahmaji told him that Kausalya and Dashrath were living and married.

Thus, there are many different stories given in different books. Since she came from Kosal, Rama’s mother is called Kausalya. She is called Kaushalya because she was very *kushal* – very skillful – in all she did. Kushal means skillful.

Drishyate` tvagrayaa buddhyaa sookshmayaa sookshma darshibhih.

That is why Kaushalya comes from the work ‘kushal’. It is in a kushal buddhi that Rama is born.

Madhumaase` site` pakshe` navamyaam karkate` shubhe`.

Look – if a Raja wants to come, which is the best month for him to come in? Ramachandra came in the King of months, in Spring! He chose the King of the

seasons to come in, because he was coming as a King, and there is equality between the King of the people and the King of the seasons.

And, when Bhagwan wanted to come into a family of farmers – come for the cows and bulls – He came in the rainy season. He wanted to steal, and do the Raas-leela, so He came at night. Ramachandra came in the Madhumasa, at midday, on the navami – the ninth day of the lunar month, at the auspicious time of Karkat. Punarvasu was the dominant planet at that time. Five stars were in the ascent, and the Surya was in a favorable position in His birth-chart. Flowers showered from the heavens. This was the auspicious time when the Master of the world, Jagannath, the Sanatana Paramatma manifested.

Neelotpaladalashyaamah peetavaasaashchaturbhujah,

jalajaarunane`traantah sfuratkundalamanditah. 3. 16

Sahastraarkaprateekaashah kireetee kunchitaalakah,

shankhachakragadaapadmavanamaalaaviraajitah. 3. 17

Anugrahaakhyahatsthe`ndusoochakasmitachandrikah,

karunaarasasampoornavishaalotpalalochanah,

shreevatsahaarake`yooranoopuraadivibhooshanah. 3. 18

Drishtvaa tam paramaatmaanam kausalyaa vismayaakulaa,

harshaashrupoornanayanaa natvaa praanjalirabraveet. 3. 19

Jagannath Bhagwan Shri Ramachandra appeared. He was blue-hued, like a freshly opened blue lotus. He was wearing a yellow stole – a pitambara. His eyes were like pink lotuses. Long ear rings dangled from His ears. Different kinds of ornaments adorned His form. His crown had the effulgence of a thousand suns. He had curly hair. This was the birth of a wonderful baby!'

No human baby is born having four-arms, with a shankha, chakra, gada and padma in his four hands. And, *anugrahaakhyahritsthe`ndusoochakasmitachandrikah* – He was smiling.

Bhagwan manifested smiling.

Why was He smiling?

There is a Chandrama in His hriday. What is this Chandrama?

It is Bhagwan's Grace and His compassion.

'Bhagwan was smiling to convey to Kausalya that He has anugraha. He had large eyes and His ornaments were filled with the rasa of compassion. Kausalya was wonderstruck to see them.'

If all the principles – from the atheist Charvaks to the Vedas – were to be examined with all their subtle differences, it would be shown that it is necessary for the vastu – the Paramatma – to be pratyaksha. The Charvaks believe only in that, which can be known by the indriyas. Yogis believe in that which is pratyaksha to the indriyas and is also seen by the mind's eye. The Vedantis believe the Atma to be pratyaksha. When avidya is removed, the aparoksha sakshatkara of our own Atma also becomes pratyaksha.

If the Ishwara exists, His aparoksha sakshatkara must be experienced. If the Ishwara is never seen by anybody He will be something to be believed in, with eyes closed. We call the Ishwara a maha-prakash – how can He be seen in darkness?

Kausalya is the shuddha buddhi, Dashrath is the shuddha mana, and Bhagwan Shri Rama took an Avatar before their eyes.

Kausalya was filled with amazement – *drishtvaa tam paramaatmaanam kausalyaa vismayaakulaa, harshaashrupoornanayanaa natvaa praanjalirabraveet* – the Paramatma, and before her eyes?!! Kausalya – *aashcharyavad pashyati kishide`na* – was filled with amazement. *Aashcharyo vakttaa kushalasyopalabdhaa* – tears of anand filled her eyes. She folded her hands and did Bhagwan's stuti.

Kausalyovaacha

De`vade`va namaste`astu shankhachakragadaadhara,

paramaatmaachyutoanantah poornastvam purushottamah. 3. 20

Vadantyagocharam vaachaam buddhyaadeenaamateendriyam,

tvaam ve`davaadinah sattaamaatram gnaanaikavigraham. 3. 21

tvame`va maayayaa vishvam srijasyavasi hansi cha,

sattvaadigunasanyukttasturya e`vaamalah sadaa. 3. 22

Karosheeva na kartaa tvam gachchhaseeva na gachchhasi,

shrunoshi na shrinosheeva pashyaseeva na pashyasi. 3. 23

Kausalya said, "He Deva of Devas! You, holding Your Shankha, Chakra, and Gada – I bow down to You. You are the Paramatma. You are achyut, anant, poorna, and You are the Purushottama. You are not a vishay of the vani. You are not even the vishay of the buddhi. You are beyond the scope of the indriyas. Knowers of the Vedas know that You are pure existence – *sattaa maatra* – and not separate from Gnan.

Our Gnan is filled with rubbish, like this is a stree and this is a purush, and other forms, and vasanas. What is needed to be known is the swarup of the sakshat Paramatma – the *gnaanaikavigraham*. Gnan is Your satta, and satta is Your swarup. This is what we are told by knowledgeable people.

People who don't accept the Paramatma's sakshatkara through praman, or don't use praman to obtain Your sakshatkara, know the Paramatma only through their kalpana. Gnan about the Paramatma is obtained from the statements of the Vedas; the same Paramatma who is within, as Maya."'

What is Maya? The Paramatma does not, Himself, have the capability to become visible, but He cannot stay without seeing. It is His svabhava to see, but He does not have the ability to be seen! A third factor, called 'Maya' comes and stands in-between. It is with this Maya that the Paramatma does srishti, sthiti and pralay, by joining the gunas of Sattva, Raja and Tama.

In His param svabhava the Paramatma remains absolutely nirmal. Even while doing karmas He is not doing anything. The Vedantis explain how He is the karta from the drishti of avidya, and in the drishti of people. From the drishti of Tattvagnan, however, He is the akarta.

Gachchhaseeva na gachchasi – He seems to be walking, but He goes where He is not, and He moves away from where He is. The Paramatma doesn't move

away from anywhere to go anywhere. If it is said that He went here and there, what kind of a Paramatma would He be? Therefore, it seems that the Paramatma is walking but He is not, although others perceive Him as walking.

Pada binu chale` sune` binu kaanaa, kara binu karama kare` bidhi naanaa.

Goswami Tulsidasji has written that He walks without having feet and does all kinds of things without having hands. He has no face but relishes all kinds of rasas, Ha has no tongue, but He is an outstanding speaker.

Apraano hyamanaah shuddha ityaadi shrutirabraveet,

samah sarve`shu bhoota`shu tishthannapi na lakshyase`. 3. 24

Agnaanadhvaantachittaanaam vyaktta e`va sume`dhasaam,

jathare` tava drishyante` iti brahmaandaah paramaanavah. 3. 25

Tvam mamodarasambhoota iti lokaanvidambase`,

bhaktte`shu paaravashyam te` drishtam me`dya raghuttama. 3. 26

Sansaarasaagare` magnaa patiputradhanaadishu,

bhramaami maayayaa te`adya paadamoolamupaagataa. 3. 27

De`va tvadroopame`tanme` sadaa tishthatu maanase`,

aavrinotu na maam maayaa tava vishvavimohinee. 3.28

Upasamhaara vishvaatmannado roopamallaukikam,

darshayasva mahaanandabaalabhaavam sukamalam,

lalitaalinginaalaapaistarishyaamyutkatam tamah. 3. 29

Shreebhagavaanuvaacha

Yadyadishtam tavaastyamba tattadbhavatu naanyathaa. 3. 30

Aham tu brahmaanaa poorvam bhoome`rbhaaraapanuttaye`,

praarthito raavanam hantum maanushatvamupaagatah. 3. 31

Tvayaa dasharathe`naaham tapasaaraadhitah puraa,

matputratvaabhikaankshanyaa tathaa kritamanindite`. 3. 32

Roopame`tattvayaa drishtam praakttanam tapasah falam,

maddarshanam vimokshaaya kalpate` hyanyadurlabham. 3. 33

Samvaadamaavayoryastu pathe`dvaa shrunuyaadapi,

sa yaati mama saaroopyam marane` matsamritim labhe`t. 3. 34

The Shrutis and Veda-mantras are quoted repeatedly. The fact is that if the nitya-aparoksha vastu is unknown – if it is agnat – there is no other method, except the Vedas, by which Gnan about it can be obtained. Closing your eyes won't give you the Gnan about the aparoksha vastu; nor imagining the seventh heaven. If the vastu remains aparoksha, and is not separated by desha, kaala and vastu, it is here and it is now. It is this – our Self – then, the statements of the Vedas will remove this agnan. There is no other method for obtaining Tattvagnan.

The Brahman is aprana; meaning, it is inactive. Prana is what activates a living being. The Brahman is amana; meaning, it has no desires and no resolves. It is shuddha; meaning, it is nirmal. It is equally present in all.

However, - *tishthannapi na lakshyase`* - different colored balls are made of the same sweet substance. Children argue over which color is best. This is a play for children. The sweetness is the same whatever the color. The one Paramatma abides in everything, but He can't be seen. *Tishthanapi na lakshyase`* - because the manushya's chitta is trapped in the darkness of agnan. People whose medha is good perceive Him. They feel that He is the one – *jaake` koti brahmaanda* – who holds millions of universes in His stomach.

'"People have a fallacy, 'You are born from my womb.' Bhagwan is ruled by His bhaktas. It is seen clearly today that He, who is absolutely independent is also helpless before His bhakta. Today I have seen Your bhakta-vatsalata; You manifested from my womb!

I am immersed in the sea of this sansara – this is my pati, this is my putra, this wealth is mine, etc. I am lost in these because of Your Maya. I have come to Your charan, Prabhu! Let this roop of Yours always remain in my hriday, and let Your

Maya never overcome me. Your Maya deludes the whole world. You are the Atma of the whole world. Please wrap up this divine form which is giving me great anand, and let me see You as a tender baby. I want to hold You close to my hriday and talk sweet words to You, and become so engrossed in You that there will be no scope for me to drown in the sansara-sagar," said Kausalya.'

What does it mean, to lose yourself in the darkness of the sansara? The disputes of 'mine and yours', and 'I' and 'you', is to wander blindly in the matters of this world. Apart from this there is no blundering around.

'Bhagwan said, "Mata, it will be as you wish. Brahmaji had prayed to Me long ago, to remove the Prithivi's burden by killing Ravana. That is why I have come in the form of a manushya. You and Dashrath had done tapasya, as My aradhana, long ago. It was in your mana that the Parameshwara should be your son."'

You see, one point must be kept in mind – apart from the Vedic Dharma there is no religious school of thought that allows that the Paramatma becomes somebody's son. According to the other philosophies, the Paramatma is always nirakara and nirguna. He remains nirvikar. The Vedic Dharma alone states that the Paramatma is the matter of which this srishti is made, and He is also its creator.

The Paramatma is both the matter - *jagat*, and the instrumental factor – *nimitta-upaadaana-kaarana,* of this creation. No other Dharma in the world accepts this principle. This is why, when people who have the sanskaras of other religions try to understand the Vedic principle, they are unable to grasp it properly. A person can get the sakshatkara of the Paramatma in the form of a son, brother, husband, sister, Swami, and servant. It is a unique principle of our Dharma that the sakshatkara of the Parameshwara can be had even in the form of a dog, a fly, or a mosquito!

'" Your desire to have Me as your son is the reason for My doing this," said Shri Ramachandra to Kausalya. "It is the fruit of the tapasya you have done in a past birth. My darshan carries a person over the sansara-sagar, which is extremely rare for others.

A person who thinks of this conversation between you and Me, or does shravan of it, will obtain My *saaroopya* when he gives up his shareer. His form will become just like Mine."

Saying this to His maiya, Shri Ramji became a little baby.

Ityuktvaa maataram raamo baalo bhootvaa ruroda ha,

baalatve`apeendraneelabho vishaalaakshoatisundarah. 3. 35

Baalaarunaprateekaasho laalitaakhilalokapah,

atha raajaa dasharathah shrutvaa putrodbhavatsavam,

aanandaarnavamagnoasaavaayayau gurunaa saha. 3. 36

Raamam raajeevapatraaksham drishtvaa harshaashrusamplutah,

gurunaa jaatakarmaani kartavyaani chakaara sah. 3. 37

One important point is that whichever indriya gives you the perception of the form, there is no doubt that it is the Paramatma in that roop. Furthermore, He is also in the relatives and relationships you see.

Generally, people are not aware of this fact. It is not that the Paramatma manifests only as an object; all the relationships that glimmer in the mana – the Paramatma is in the form of all these people. It is not that He appears only in the form of things, He manifests even in the form of the relationship we feel for Him. There is no *parinaama* – no transformation – in this. The Paramatma remains unchanged in every perception.

'Bhagwan Ramachandra became a baby, and began to cry.'

Do you know of any Ishwara in the world, in any majhab, who knows how to cry? Jesus and Mohammed are not the Ishwara; they are the son and the messenger of the Ishwara. In no other religion will you find any mention of the Ishwara crying! Nowhere is it written that one who cries is the Ishwara.

'Bhagwan's kajal ran down His cheeks with His tears.'

This roop of the Ishwara could be the principle of *'sarvam khalvidam brahm'*. All this jada-chetan and vishwa are the Brahman.

And in this you can see, '*ve`dam sarvam khalvidam brahm'* – know that all this is the Brahman.

'Sad idam sarvam' – everything is the Sat – the Brahman.

'Chid idam brahm' – everything that is the Chit is the Brahman.

This is the swarup of the Paramatma.

'When Shri Ramachandra began to cry His shareer had the luster of a blue sapphire. He had large eyes. He looked very beautiful. It seemed as though the effulgence of the early sunrise. It gave great anand to the Devtas.

When Dashrathji was told that he has got a son, he felt he was immersed in a sea of anand. He came there, accompanied by Vasishthaji.'

This shows that even in the darshan of his putra, Dashrathji's priorities were Dharma and Gnan, not his own mamata. Dharma and Gnan are automatically present when Guruji, himself, is present. You may do the best things on your own initiative, but they will have a smear of kama and bhoga. When you do something that pleases Guruji, something he tells you to do, your actions will contain Dharma; there will be no vasana to sully your actions.

'Guruji went with Dashrathji to see the newborn. He, too, was filled with anand. They came and had a darshan of Bhagwan's divine baby form. Tears of anand filled their eyes at the sight of kamal-nayan Shri Ramachandra.

Dashrathji arranged for the ritual of jaat-karma sanskara to be done by Guruji – *gurunaa jaatakarmaani chakaara sah* – this karma is considered to be a kartavya – a duty.'

All the different species are born naturally, including the manushya jaati. They are a part of Prakriti. Sanskaras are done to bestow beneficial attributes to the child. If a child is not taught how to sit, eat with the right hand, talk, wash etc, he will live like an animal. People say that everything will be learnt naturally if children are left to themselves. Such people have no idea about the swarup of the Vedic Dharma. Sanskaras are needed to make a manushya refined and cultured.

Hair grows on the head; there is a sanskara for this. There is a sanskara called the *garbhaadhaana sanskara*, when the father's seed is implanted in the mother's womb. The *punsavan* and *seemantonayan* sanskaras are done during a women's first pregnancy. The jaatakarma sanskara is done when a baby is born; its purpose is to implant subtle subconscious tendencies that are appropriate to the highest development of a manushya.

There is a need for sanskaras and teaching for children, to make them fit to achieve the four Purusharthas of Artha, Dharma, Kama and Moksha. A child cannot develop his full potential without sanskaras and shiksha.

About the removal of the doshas of the seed, Manuji has said, *'vaijikam gaarbhikam chaiva* – are the two doshas, and these should be removed by doing sanskaras.

Kaike`yee chaatha bharatamasoota kamale`kshanaa,

sumitraayaam yamau jaatau poorne`ndusadrishaananau. 3. 38

'Bharat was born to Kaikeyi. Sumitra had two beautiful sons.'

Look; people are very good at accumulating wealth, but when it comes to giving, it is a different matter altogether! When money comes, they never give a thought to where it is coming from, but a great does of thought is given when they are to give five rupees to somebody. Mamata for money makes them reluctant to give, not mamata for Dharma! People are happy when money comes, but not when it goes. There should be occasions for giving, in the jeevan of a manushya. When a person's house has occasion for money to come in, but no occasion for it to go out, the house will burst like an overflowing dam.

Tadaa graamasahasraani braahmane`bhye` mudaa dadau,

suvarnaani cha ratnaani vaasaansi surabheeh shubhaa. 3. 39

'Dashrathji joyfully gave thousands of villages to Brahmins. He also gave gold, precious jewels and clothes. He donated cows of a superior breed. It is the duty of a Raja to look after the Brahmins, because they give their life to studying and teaching the Vedas, doing Karma-Kand, obtaining and preserving Gnan, doing

dhyana, Yagna, japa, etc. It is the duty of every Grihastha to look after the people in the Brahmacharya and Sanyas Ashrams.

It is written in the Vedas that when any person gets a Vedic ritual done and if a mistake of enunciation of a mantra is made by the Brahmin conducting the ritual, it is the yajaman who gets the dosha. Logically, the rule should be that that the person who makes the mistake should get the dosha, but the vidvans have made this an exception, because it is the duty of the yajaman who is getting the ritual done to ensure that his purohit is properly trained to be a competent vidvan. This is why the yajaman is held responsible for a mistake made by his purohit.

I had gone to a Veda-Bhavan once, where six young boys were studying. There were two Pundits who taught them. The Institution was worth lakhs of rupees. I asked whether the students were also provided with free boarding and lodging.

'Yes.'

'Then why are there only six students?" I asked.

The Pundits told me that youngsters were unwilling to take the benefits of this Institute. 'The boys tell us that they will be looked after by us as long as they study with us, but what after they have completed their Vedic studies? Who will give them jobs? People no longer want to pay for Vedic rituals to be done.'

It is the task of the yajamans to think about how future generations will uphold and sustain this ancient knowledge. Unless daan is done and donations are given for the maintenance of these beneficial rituals how can they survive?

'Maharaj Dashrath gave lavishly.'

The Ramcharitamanasa says that everybody was so elated that people gave away the things they were given; they did not keep any of the gifts for their own use! They wanted to give, and make others happy.

The naam-karan sanskara, the ritual of giving a name to the baby, should also be done. Sooner or later, the child will ask why he was given this name. These days, parents give meaningless names to their children, calling them Pinky or Tinky etc. If a child is given a name like Rama he will come to know who Rama was,

and what admirable qualities He had. However, what gunas will a child called Minky or Chinty learn about? The future of the child must be kept in mind.

Yasmin ramante` munayo vidyayaa gnaanaviplave`,

tam guruh praaha raame`ti ramanaadraama ityapi. 3. 40

Bharanaadbharato naama lakshmanam lakshanaanvitam,

shatrughnam shatruhantaarame`vam guruabhaashata. 3. 41

Lakshmano raamachandre`na shatrughno bharate`na cha,

dvandveebhooya charantau tau paayasaanshaanusaaratah. 3. 42

Raamastu lakshmane`naatha vicharanbaalaleelayaa,

ramayaamaasa pitarau te`shtitairmugdhabhaashitaih. 3. 43

Bhaale` svarnamayaashvatthaparnamukttaafalaprabham,

kanthe` ratnamanivraatamadhyadveepinakhaanchitam. 3. 44

Karnayoh svarnasampannaratnaarjunasataalukam,

shinjaanamanimanjeerakatisootraangadairvritam. 3. 45

Smitavaktraalpadashanamindraneelamaniprabham,

angane` ringamaanam tam tarnakaananu sarvatah. 3. 46

Dashtvaa dasharatho raajaa kausalyaa mumude` tadaa,

bhokshyamaano dasharatho raamame`heeti chaasakrit. 3. 47

Aahvayatyatiharshe`na pre`mnaa naayaati leelayaa,

aanaye`ti cha kausalyaamaaha saa sasmitaa sutam. 3. 48

Dhaavatyapi na shaknoti sprashtum yogimanogatim,

prahasansvamaayaati kardamaankitapaaninaa,

kinchit griheetvaa kavalam punare`va palaayate`. 3. 49

'He, in whom great Munis take delight.'

When do they take delight in Him?

'It is when agnan is destroyed through vidya and Tattvagnan – *vidyayaa gnaanaviplave`.* His name is Rama – *ramanaat raamah.* He is Rama because He takes delight in everybody and the great Gnanis take delight in Him.'

The word 'Rama' is not indicative of any karta-bhokta Parameshwara. Pundits know this, but they have to ignore this when they are teaching, because the word '*raama'* is not made in the sense of the adhikaran – the substratum – *'ramante` asmin iti raamah.'*

When the word 'Rama' is understood as being the adhikaran it indicates that it is the support of all, the substratum of all, the Paramatma; not Rama who delights.

For example, a garden is for *aa-raama* – meaning, for becoming refreshed. People come to a garden and do *ramana* – they enjoy themselves. There are three words that are similar – *aaraama,* meaning comfort, *abhiraama*, meaning to enjoy, and *raama*. Rama is the Brahman who is the adhishthana of all.

If an agnani gives his son the name of Rama, that boy will be a karta – *raamah karoti, raamah gachchhati* – Rama is doing something, Rama is going somewhere. If we see the authentic meaning of the word 'Rama' the usage given as an example is incorrect.

'Rama is beyond Prakriti; He is the Paramatma.'

Prakriti means – *prakrishta kriti* – one whose creation is visible. And, the one who gives satta-sfurti to Prakriti is the Atma, and His name is 'Rama'. The one who nourishes and sustains is Bharat. Lakshman is given this name because he has the lakshan – the distinction of being inseparable from Rama. Shatrughna was given this name because he was a destroyer of enemies. This naam-karan sanskara was not done on a personal whim; it was done by Guru Vasishtha – *gururabhaashata.*

The naam-karan sanskara of a boy born in a Brahmin family should be done by his father when he is ten days old. For a boy born in a Kshatriya family it should be done by a Brahmin. The name is given according to the nakshatra – the lunar asterism – the month, and the sign of the Zodiac (rashi). Astrology is a great

science. It is not proper when people name their babies at their own fancy. The Shastra is of benefit in these matters.

Lakshmanji was always with Shri Ramachandra, and Shatrughnaji with Bharat, whatever they did and wherever they went. This is because Lakshmanji was the result of the payas Kausalya gave Sumitra and Shatrughna was the result of the payas Kaikeyi gave. The *ansha* – meaning, part – is always inclined to the *anshee* – meaning, the whole of which it is a part. There is another leela in this – if the anshee is satisfied, the ansha is satisfied automatically.

Ane`na vishvatmaa bhagavaan tripyataam.

The whole world becomes satisfied if the Parameshwara is satisfied. All the jeevas become tripta when the Parameshwara is tripta. Tripti of the anshee gives tripti to the ansha. There is no need to give satisfaction to the ansha separately.

So, when Rama is pleased with somebody, so is Lakshman; and Shatrughna is automatically satisfied when Bharat is satisfied. No separate effort is needed to please Lakshman and Shatrughna. There is a description in the Valmiki Ramayana that baby Rama was put into His bed to sleep, but He would not fall asleep.

Na cha te`na binaa nidraam labhate` purushottamah – Rama was unable to sleep unless Lakshman was placed beside Him at bedtime.

Mrishtamannamupaaneetamashnaati na hi tam vinaa – if the most delicious sweetmeat was offered to Rama, He would not eat until Lakshman shared it with Him. The Valmiki Ramayana has many such episodes. The focus of the Adhyatma Ramayana, however, is on the Paramartha. The Valmiki Ramayana gives importance to interpersonal interaction in the sansara.

The bond of prema between Rama and Lakshman was so strong that it was like one prana in two shareers. In His baal-leela Rama always stayed with Lakshman. He spoke with a childish lisp that filled His mother and father with delight. One day, Maiya dressed up Ramlala lovingly. She painted a leaf of the banyan tree with gold paint, on His forehead. She placed a golden tiara, hung with pearls, on His head. She made Him wear a long necklace, studded with precious gems, armbands and wristlets, and a girdle. She also put a gold chain wound His neck,

which had a pendant of tiger-claws, to ward away all evil. Long dangling ear rings hung from the lobes of His ears. *'Smitavaktraalpadashanam* – His tiny teeth gleamed when He smiled.

Goswamiji has given a charming description of Shri Rama as a baby in 'Kavitavali' and 'Gitavali'. We become immersed in anand when we read, or listen to it. The luster of Ramachandra's deha was like a beautiful blue sapphire.

'Angane` ringamaanam tam tarnakaananu sarvatah' – small calves frolicked freely in Dashrath's courtyard. Rama and Lakshman would crawl after them, turning as they turned. Raja Dashrath and Ma Kausalya were filled with joy as they watched. Dashrath would call out to Rama when he sat for lunch. 'O Rama, come here.'

'Bhokshyamaano dasharatho raamame`heeti chaasakrit – he wanted to feed his son with his own hand. Rama, however, was reluctant to leave His play. When He did not respond after several calls, Dashrathji told Kausalya to call Rama. She would go smilingly, running to catch Him, but Bhagwan moves faster than the mana of the Yogis! Kausalya couldn't even touch Him, but He smiled and came to her.

Dhoosara dhoori bhare` tana aaye` - He came, covered with dust, with dusty hands and dust on His clothes! A loving Maiya like Kausalya never tells her child to wash or bathe and then come to her.

In Yashoda Maiya's leela it is written that she never knew how to scold her beloved child, no matter how dirty Krishna became! In the same way, Kausalya Maiya - *'kardamaamankitapaaninaa'* – took Rama to Dashrath as He was, covered with dust. Rama took a mouthful of food from Dashrath and ran off to play again.

Kausalyya jananee tasya maasi maasi prakurvatee,

vaayanaani vichitraani samalankritya raaghavam. 3. 50

'Every month, on the date on which Rama was born, Kausalya made an excuse to celebrate. She ordered a feast and sent gifts of sweets to people as is the custom at weddings.'

The Shiva Purana uses all the words used in common parlance for the traditional wedding customs.

'Today is the auspicious nakshatra of my son, so I must distribute sweets,' she said. 'Today, Ramlala has completed three months! We should send sweets to everybody!'

Rama, Lakshman, Bharat and Shatrughna were so energetic that they kept their mothers busy looking after them. The mothers had no time to attend to household matters.

Grihakrityam tayaa tyakttam tasya chaapalyakaarahaat,

e`kadaa raghunaathoasau gato maataramantike`. 3. 52

Bhojanam de`hi me` maatarna shrutam kaaryasakttayaa,

tatah krodha`na bhaandaani lagude`naahanattadaa. 3. 53

Shikyastham paatayaamaasa gavyam cha navaneetakam,

lakshmanaaya dadau raamo bharataaya yathaakramam. 3. 54

Shatrughnaaya dadau pashchaaddadhi dugdham tathaiva cha,

soode`na kathite` maatre` haasyam kritvaa pradhaavati. 3. 55

Aagatam taam vilokyaatha tatah sarvaih palaayitam,

kausalyaa dhaavamaanaapi praskhalantee pade` pade`. 3. 56

The mother's attention was fully on her son; nothing else occupied her mind. 'Where did He go? What is He doing? How sweetly He smiles! What is He saying?' Such thoughts kept the three mothers busy all day long.

One day Bhagwan Ramachandra went to His mother. "Ma, I want to eat," He said. Maiya was preoccupied with some housework for Rama; she did not heed Him and He got angry.

Tatah krodha`na bhaandaani lagude`naahanattadaa – He picked up a stick and started to break all the pots that were there, including those that were hanging

from the ceiling. All the milk , butter, curds etc was spilt. Ramlala fed curds and fresh butter to Bharat, Lakshman and Shatrughna.

The cook went and complained to Mata Kausalya. Ramji laughed! When they saw Maiya coming to catch them, all four boys ran, with Kausalya running after them. Obviously, it was impossible for her to catch up with the boys, and Ramji let her catch Him. Kausalya caught Ramji, but she found it impossible to say anything to Him – *kinchinnovaacha bhaaminee* – she just could not scold Him! The prema in her hriday was too strong to administer a rebuke even though He had done such damage!

Raghunaatham kare` dhritvaa kinchinnovaacha bhaaminee,

baalabhaavam samaashritya mandam mandam rurodaha. 3. 57

Te` sarve` laalitaa maatraa gaadhamaalingya yatratah,

e`vamaanandasandohajagadaanandakaarakah. 3. 58

Maayaabaalabapurdhritvaa ramayaamaasa dampatee,

atha kaale`na te` sarve` kaumaaram pratipe`dire`. 3. 59

Upaneetaa vasishthe`na sarvavidyaavishaaradaah,

dhanurve`de` cha nirataah sarvashaastrarthave`dinah. 3. 60

Babhoovurjagataam naathaa leelayaa nararoopinah,

lakshmanastu sadaa raamamanugachchhati saadaram. 3. 61

Se`vyase`vakabhaave`na shatrughno bharatam tathaa,

raamashchaapadharo nityam tooneebaanaanvitah prabhuh. 3. 62

Ashvaaroodho vanam yaati mrigayaayai salakshmanah,

hatvaa dushtamrigaansarvaanpitre` sarvam nyave`dayan. 3. 63

Praatarutthitaaya susnaatah pitaraavabhivaadya cha,

paurakaaryaani sarvaani karoti vinayaanvitah. 3. 64

Maiya stood, holding Ramlala's hand, without saying a word! Ramlala was crying softly. Maiya cuddled all the boys lovingly. She spoke tenderly, holding them close – *'gaadhamaalingya yatnatah'.* Rama is a treasury of anand. He is the karana of anand in this world. He is the one who gives anand.

Days passed swiftly. The boys became young men. Vasishthaji gave them the upanayan sanskara – all four boys received the sacred thread and were initiated to the Gayatri Mantra. They began their formal education.'

A manushya cannot know even one letter of the alphabet without being taught. Even *ka, kha, gha* have to be taught. There are self-made people who say, 'everything will get done automatically.' Oh! What will be done automatically if nobody teaches you anything?

'After the upanayan sanskara Bhagwan Rama acquired proficiency in all the vidyas – He became an expert in all the different branches of learning.'

The upanayan sanskara means that the youth has to stay at his Guru's Ashram, even if he is the son of a Raja, for the duration of his education, without getting any preferential treatment. The upanayan sanskara is the introduction to formal education. When a child learns from a tutor who comes to his house , he gets the thought, 'my parents are paying him to come and teach me.' When a child goes to the Guru to be taught, his respect for his teacher is sustained.

'Bhagwan achieved skills in all the vidyas. He gained mastery of the Dhanur Veda, meaning the science of archery, and He also learnt discrimination in all the Shastras.

Bhagwan is the Swami of this jagat, but He has assumed a manushya form as a leela.

Lakshman always walked behind Rama with a feeling of serving Him, and Shatrughna with Bharat. Rama always kept His dhanush-baan with Him. Sometimes they rode out to hunt to kill dangerous wild animals. When they returned, Rama would tell Dashrath how the hunt went.'

Hunting was necessary, both to keep the people in the villages safe from predatory animals and also to practice shooting a moving object. To protect the country, Dharma, community, and Sampradaya is also a Raja's duty. It is not that

everybody becomes a trader or businessman. How can a country be safe if there is nobody to protect the people? This is why different work is allocated to different people. One group takes up a spade and digs the ground. One, a Vaishya, does trading. One, the Kshatriya, takes up the art of warfare; and one, the Brahmin, does rituals, Yagnas etc. A manushya has to do everything to maintain the arrangements of his Dharma.

When a person has an early morning bath, it awakens the shakti gathered during his sleep, so that it comes into his jeevan.

'Bhagwan Rama would finish His bath and go to greet His mother and father respectfully.'

Bowing your head to your elders helps you to progress in life. *Na kasyonnatyai bhavati shirasastvavanatih* - bow your head before Shivaji and attain the highest state!

'*Paurakaaryaani sarvaani karoti vinayaanvitah* – Rama did every kind of task that needed to be done for the welfare of His people, His *prajaa'*. No work was beneath Him.'

A person should have the habit of doing work of all kinds. Udiya Babaji Maharaj used to tell us, 'seva is not done as an obligation to somebody; it is done to cultivate a good habit. To serve somebody is to do a great benefit to one's self. How will you be of any benefit to anybody else if your habit is spoilt?'

Sarvaani means, Rama would do the smallest of tasks to benefit His praja. He did everyting with great humility. He never showed arrogance by saying, 'I did this for your benefit; you should show gratitude by folding your hands to Me.'

Bandhubhih sahito nityam bhuktvaa munibhiranvaham,

dharmashaastrarahasyaani shrinoti vyaakaroti cha. 3. 65

'Rama ate all His meals with His brothers.'

It is not that He was only concerned with His own comfort or convenience.

'Rama would sit with Mahatmas and listen to their interpretations about the rahasya of the Shastras.'

The Dharma-Shastra is *aagna-pradhaana* – obedience is predominant. The Mahatmas would give instructions about the method of the work that was to be done, and Rama did what they said. The rahasya of these things is not written openly. The rahasya is known only to the Mahatmas who have experience and Gnan about the Dharma-Shastra. They explain it to others.

E`vam paraatmaa manujaavataaro manushyalokaananusritya sarvam,

chakre`avikaaree parinaamaheeno vichaaryamaane` na karoti kinchit. 3. 61

'Thus, the Paramatma assumed the roop of a manushya ans behaved like an ordinary man. There is no vikar in Him. When ordinary people do things driven by kama, krodha, lobha, dambha, mada and matsarya there is vikar in the karma. When something is done as a favor, to oblige somebody, some mistake or other is always made. The work we do should be such that the other person is helped without his even knowing about it. Work is not done to oblige.

There is no parinam in the nirvikar Paramatma. That means, a fruit is created when some karma is done. Ramachandra does not get any fruit for His karmas. He has no desire for any fruit. He does His duty meticulously. If you think about His swarup, He is the Gnan-swarup, anand-swarup, Atma-swarup Bhagwan Rama – *na karoti kinchit* – who doesn't do anything.

Just think of all the things that are done in the shareer. Do you make your pulse beat? You are a great karta! It must be you, who does the work of making your hair grow? You must be making your blood circulate in your shareer? Is it you who digest the food you eat, and throws out the remains?

Just as Prakriti does her work as long as the shareer remains, the Prakriti that is the Paramatma's assumed shareer continues to do all the work. In this, the abhiman – *aham karoti vrithaaabhimaanah* – 'I am the karta' is absolutely false. *'Naiva kinchit karomeeti yukttam manye`t tattvavit'* – this statement of the Gita is absolutely true. All abhiman of doing great and small things is false. If you give some thought to this you will understand that the Atmadev in the shareer does nothing.

That which is the satta does not do anything; that which is Gnan does not do anything; and that which is anand does not do anything. That which is anant

does not do anything either. The abhiman of the 'I' makes itself the karta and gets trapped.

I had read about a Mahatma who was invited to the house of a wealthy Seth. The house was palatial. The Seth welcomed the Mahatma with a sumptuous meal and then took him on a tour of the house and garden. His property was extensive. When they came back to the drawing room, the Mahatma strolled over to a large globe that decorated a table. 'What is this?' he asked.

'Maharaj, it is a map of the world,' said the Seth.

'Then it should have our Bharat-varsha?'

The Seth showed India to the Mahatma.

'Where is your city, Mumbai, in this?'

The Seth pointed to the dot that indicated Mumbai.

'Where is your mansion?'

'How can my mansion be shown in this limited space, Maharaj?'

'When your mansion is not even seen in the map of the world, how will it be found in the map of the Parabrahm Paramatma, Seth?' asked the Mahatma. People hold on to abhiman that is absolutely false, and consider others to be inferior!

Baal Kanda

The Fourth Sarga

Meeting Vishwamitra; killing Tadaka

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Kadaachitkaushikoabhyaagaadayodhyaam jvalanaprabhah,

drashtum raamam paraatmaanam jaatam gnaatvaa svamaayayaa. 4. 1

Drishtvaa dasharatho raajaa pratyuthaayaachire`na tu,

vasishthe`na samaagamya poojayitvaa yathaavidhi. 4. 2

Abhivaadya munim raajaa praanjalirbhakttinamradheeh,

kritaarthoasmi muneendraaham tvadaagamanakaaranaat. 4. 3

Tvadvidhaa yadgriham yaanti tatraivaayaanti sampadah,

yadarthamaagatoasi tvam broohi satyam karomi tat. 4. 4

Vishvaamitroapi tam preetah pratyuvaacha mahaamatih,

aham parvani sampraapte` drishtvaa yashtum suraanpitrin. 4. 5

'Bhagwan Rama's leela began! Kaushik Muni has the brilliance of agni. In just one lifetime, he subdued his Kshatriya nature – he was born in a Kshatriya lineage – and achieved the nature of a Brahmin.'

Kaushik Muni is Vishwamitra. In Sanskrit, *vishvaamitra* is called *vishva-mitra*, which means, friend of the whole world. The word 'Vishwamitra' can be used for anybody, to indicate that he has universal benevolence.

'When Vishwamitra came to know that Bhagwan has taken an Avatar as Rama, using His Maya to manifest as a manushya, he came to Ayodhya for Rama's darshan.'

A Mahatma sent word to the Raja to inform him that he had come into his city. The Raja said, 'let the Mahatma come.' Then, the Mahatma was escorted to his chamber. Here, however, Dashrathji was a great Emperor who knew the

etiquette. A penniless Mahatma is superior in stature to all the Rajas in the world. Unless tyaga is given greater importance than wealth and power, wealthy people will not remain wealthy, because when vasana for wealth arises, people want to fight each other to get more wealth and power. It is the tyaga who stands in-between them. 'Oh, my brother! You have so much already; why do you want more? What will you do by getting more wealth? Look how I am, healthy and carefree, better than both of you!'

This arrangement of tyaga is actually what maintains the balance in the sansara. The people who are rich and powerful, but do not consider the tyaga to be superior, harm themselves. Their wealth and power do not endure.

'Dashrathji got up and went forward respectfully to greet Vishwamitraji.'

Pratyutthaaya means, with all respect, and *achire`na* means, at once. This is not like a ruler sending a message to his subject to wait while he took his time to summon him.

'Dashrathji got up from his throne at once and went forth to greet Vishwamitraji, and bring him into the Court. He invited the Muni to sit by his side, and did Vishwamitra's puja with full ceremony. He folded his hands and bowed his head.

"He King of Munis!" he said, "I am blessed by your auspicious arrival. It is good fortune that you have come to Ayodhya. When a Mahatma like you – *tvadvidhaa yad graham yaanti tatraivaayaanti sampadah* – comes to somebody's house, all prosperity comes, too."

Dashrathji continued, "please tell me what I can do for you. I will definitely do it. I will not let any wish of yours go unfulfilled."

Vishwamitra was pleased. "whenever I begin to prepare to do a Yagna or when any auspicious day comes, suitable for me to propitiate the Devtas and Pitris, the Daityas come and disrupt the ritual. These Asuras are led by Marich and Subahu.

Yadaarabhe` tadaa daityaa vighnam kurvanti nityashah,

maareechashcha subaahushchaapare` chaanucharaastayoh. 4. 6

Atastayorvadhaarthaaya jye`shtham raamam prayachchhame`,

lakshmane`na saha braatraa tava shre`yo bhavishyati. 4. 7

Vasishthe`na sahaamantrya deeyataam yadi rochate`,

paprachchha gurume`kaante` raajaa chintaaparaayanah. 4. 8

Kim karomi guro raamam tyakttum notsahate` manah,

bahuvarshasahasraante` kashte`notpaaditaah sutaah. 4. 9

Chatvaaroamaratulyaaste` te`sham raamaativallabhah,

raamastvito gachchhati che`nna jeevaami kathanchana. 4. 10

Pratyaakhyaato yadi munih shaapam daasyatyasanshayah,

katham shre`yo bhave`nmahyamasatyam chaapi na sprishe`t. 4. 11

Vasishtha uvaacha

Shrunu raajande`vaguhyam gopaneeyam prayatnatah,

raamo na maanusho jaatah paramaatmaa sanaatanah. 4. 12

Bhoome`rbhaaraavataaraaya brahmanaa praarthitah puraa,

sa e`va jaato bhavane` kausalyaayaam tavaanagha. 4. 13

Tvam tu prajaapatih poorvam kashyapo brahmanah sutah,

kausalyaa chaaditirde`vamaataa poorvam yashasvinee,

Bhavantam tapa ugram vai te`paathe` bahuvatsaram. 4. 14

agraamyavishayau vishnupoojaadhyaanaikatatparau,

tadaa prasanno bhagavaan varado bhakktavatsalah. 4. 15

Vrineeshva varamityuktte` tvam me` putra bhavaamala,

iti tvayaa yaachitoasau bhagavaanbhootabhaavanah. 4. 16

Tathe`tyuktvaadya putraste` jaato raamah sa e`va hi,

she`shastu lakshmano raajan raamame`vaanvapadyata. 4. 17

Jaatau bharatashatrughnau shankhachakre`gadaabritah,

yogamaayaapi seete`ti jaataa janakanandinee. 4. 18

Therefore, please let your eldest son, Rama, and His younger brother Lakshman come with me, and kill these two Asuras. *Tava shre`yo bhavishyati* – you will get great good fortune if you grant this wish of mine."'

The Valmiki Ramayana gives this episode at great length, describing a long discussion between Vishwamitra and Dashrath. Dashrath's moha and prema for Rama was so strong that he was not willing to let Rama go. In the Adhyatma Ramayana this episode is given in a more compact form. Here, Dashrathji consulted Vasishthaji at once, because Vishwamitraji had suggested he confer with Vasishthaji before taking any decision.

If you take the advice of a small-hearted person, the advice will be narrow-minded. You should take advice from a large-hearted person. The advice to hold on is not the correct advice. The advice of a small-hearted person is always sullied, leading to quarrels and strife, because small-hearted people are always miserly and grasping. The advice of great people is magnanimous.

Raja Dashrath consulted Guru Vasishtha without any third person being present.

"Gurudev, I am very worried," he said. 'What should I do? I don't have the will to let Rama go. I got my four sons after I reached old age! My sons are as bright as Devtas, but of them all, Rama is dearest to me. I cannot live without him.

I realize that if I refuse, the Mahatma will give a shaap. So please show me a way out, so that I don't have to let Rama go, and I get good fortune, and the Muni does not give me a shaap for refusing to let Rama go with him.

One thing more – *katham shre`yo bhave`nmahyamasatyam chaapi na sprishe`t* – I have given my word to fulfill Vishwamitra's wish. I should not get the dosha of breaking my word. Please keep these three things in mind and advise me."

Vasishthaji said, "Raja, I will tell you something very secret." Vasishthaji whispered something very sweet in Dashrath's ear. "Rajan! You don't know what the Sadhu has in mind. Vishwamitra has come to get your son married. This Rama is not an ordinary manushya; He is the Sanatana Paramatma!

Brahmaji requested Him to reduce the burden on the Prithivi, so He has come to your home, through Kausalya's womb. In a previous birth you were Prajapati Kashyap and Kausalya was Aditi. Both of you did an intense tapasya. When Bhagwan appeared before you, you did not even know what the sukha of this sansara is like! You felt some curiosity about it.'"'

Agraamyaave`shayo vishnupoojaadhyaanaikatatparau,

Kashyap and Aditi were continuously immersed in dhyana. They knew nothing about the relationship between a man and woman, or what a son is.

'"When you saw Bhagwan you felt a longing for Him to be your son. Bhagwan was pleased with you; He agreed. He is bhakta-vatsal. He always fulfils the wishes of His bhaktas. Bhagwan told you to ask for a vara, and you asked Him to become your son. Bhagwan said, '*tathaastu* – so be it*.'"'*

The Vaishnavas say that the purport of this is that Kashyap and Aditi asked for a varadaan which was impossible for Bhagwan to grant – they asked for a son like Bhagwan. If Bhagwan becomes somebody's son, will He be genuine or false? He is the *aadi* – the origin – of the entire jagat as well as its *anta* – its end. Who would He be born after, and become the son?

Another question comes up here. Kashyap said, 'let me have a son like You.' Bhagwan thought, 'he is not asking Me to be his son; he wants a son like Me. Where on earth am I to find any other like Me?' So Bhagwan was silent.

After a while Bhagwan said, 'I told you to ask for a vara. You asked for a son like Me. I cannot grant your wish because there is nobody like Me. Since I cannot grant what you asked for, I will give you its equal.' Even after giving Kashyap-Aditi the equal of what they asked for, Bhagwan felt indebted to them.

Bhagwan remains a debtor of His bhaktas – this is what is explained here. Bhagwan also told Hanumanji that He could never repay him for what he had done.

Maiyye`va jeernataam jaatu yatvayopakritam kape`.

(I will always remain indebted to you, Hanuman.)

Bhagwan told the gopis, 'I am your debtor. *'Aisaa kauna udaara jaga maheen* – who, in this world, is as generous as Bhagwan is?' The very thought of Bhagwan's sheel-svabhava melts the hriday!

'"It is the same Bhagwan who has come to your house, Dashrath," said Vasishthaji, "because you and Kausalya were Kashyap and Aditi. Bhagwan has taken an Avatar in your house as Rama. Yogamaya is Bhagwan's unimaginable shakti, who is not separate from Him. She is born as Sita in Janakpur.

Vishvaamitroapi raamaaya taam yojayitumaagatah,

e`tadguhyatamam raajanna vakttavyam kadaachana. 4. 19

Atah preete`na manasaa poojayitvaatha kaushikam,

pre`shayasva ramaanaatham raaghavam sahalakshmanam. 4. 20

Vishwamitra has the secret purpose of making Ramji meet Sitaji, who is His Yogamaya. You must not tell anybody about this proposed marriage, about Rama-Avatar and Sita-Avatar, and the Devtas' knowing about this."

After hearing this, Dashrathji did an elaborate puja of Vishwamitra and sent Rama and Lakshman with him. "I am fulfilled," thought Dashrath. "Bhagwan is my son! What greater good fortune could there be?"

Vasishthe`naivamukttastu raajaa dasharathastadaa,

kritakrityamivaatmaanam me`ne` pramuditaantarah. 4. 21

Aahooya raamaraame`ti lakshmane`ti cha saadaram,

aalingya moordhanyavaghraaya kaushikaaya samarpayah. 4. 22

Tatoatihrishto bhagavaanvishvaamitrah prataapavaan,

aasheerbhinandyaatha aagatau raamalakshmanau. 4. 23

Griheetvaa chaapatooneerabaanakhadangadharau yayau,

kinchidde`shamatikramya raamamaahooya bhakttitah. 4. 24

Dadau balaam chaatibalaam vidye`d dve` de`vanirmite`,

yayorgrahanamaatre`na kshutkshaamaadi na jaayate`. 4. 25

Tata utteerya gangaam te` taatakaavanamaayaman,

vishvaamitrastadaa praaha raamam satyaparaakramam. 4. 26

Atraasti taatakaa naama raakshasee kaamaroopinee,

baadhate` lokamakhilam jahi taamavichaarayan. 4. 27

Tathe`ti dhanuraadaaya sagunam raghunandanah,

tankaaramakarotte`na shabde`naapoorayadvanam. 4. 28

Tatshrutvaasahamaanaa saa taatakaa ghoraroopinee,

krodhasammoorchchhitaa raamamabhidudraava me`ghavat. 4. 29

Taame`ke`na share`naashu taadayaamaasa vakshasi,

papaata vipine` ghoraa vamantee rudhiram bahu. 4. 30

Tatoatisundari yakshee sarvaabharanabhooshitaa,

shaapaaptishaachataam praaptaa mukttaa raamaprasaadatah. 4. 31

Natvaa raamam parikramya gataa raamaagnayaa divam. 4. 32

Tatoatihrishtah parirabhya raamam moordhanyavaghraaya vichintyam kinchit,

sarvaasvajaalam sarahasyamantram preetyaabhiraamaaya dadau muneendrah. 4. 33

Dashrathji's hriday was filled with anand, He felt fulfilled.'

It is said that when a manushya feels he has a great many things to do, and feels poornata when they are done, he says, 'enough! I have no more kartavya left. I am krita-kritya; I am fulfilled. I have no duties left.' And when a businessman achieves his goal in business he says, 'oh, I have achieved my purpose.' A Kshatriya says, 'I have attained the ability to hit the bull's eye.' A Brahmin says, 'I have got the Gnan I sought.'

A Brahmin feels fulfilled when he gets Gnan, a Kshatriya when he perfects his aim, and a Vaishya when he earns great wealth. The fulfillment of a person who

does Karma-kanda is when he gets the fruit of the Karma. These are the four kinds of fulfillment.

'Dashrath respectfully called Rama-Lakshman, since he now knew the truth about them. He embraced both his sons, smelling their heads as a blessing. Then he entrusted them to Vishwamitra. The Mahatma was filled with anand.

When Rama and Lakshman came before Vishwamitra he gave them a lot of ashirvad. He held Rama's hand in one hand and Lakshman's in the other. The three of them walked in this manner, with Vishwamitra in-between the two brothers. Rama and Lakshman were both armed with a bow, a quiver full of arrows and a sword.

Vishwamitra called Rama to him after they had gone some distance. He gave both the young men the vidya called 'bala' and 'atibala'. These techniques enabled a person to live without food or water for many years, and to overcome enemies, even fight them physically. There are also herbs that are called by these names, which give great strength if eaten in small quantities.

'After this they crossed the Gangaji and entered a densely forested area called the Tataka Van. Vishwamitra told Rama, "a Rakshasi called Tataka lives here. That is why this forest is called the Tataka van. This Rakshasi is *kaama-roopinee* – she can assume any form at will. It is very difficult to understand a Rakshasa because they take whatever roop they want, when they come to us."'

I remember how, when we were youngsters, we spoke casually – suppose we become nishkama; our antahkarana becomes nishkama – then, will kama be dead or not?

We were told that it is kama in the form of wanting to be nishkama! Kama is present in every desire. It is not dead; it is alive and active whenever there is any wish in the mana. We want to be nishkama so that kama dies.

No-no! Kama has transferred itself – it has come in the form of the desire to be nishkama. It is settled in out hriday in a new form.

Bhagwan has said, *'kaamaroopam duraasadam* – nobody can recognize kama easily when it comes in the form of nishkamata.' This kama is a Rakshasa because it assumes a variety of forms. If you say you don't want anything,

understand that this Rakshasa has come in the form of not wanting anything! The adhyatmik kama is the most dangerous of al, because a manushya fails to recognize that it is kama. It cannot be discarded unless it is recognized as something bad; the person feels that this is a good desire to have.

This Rakshasi Tataka is a form of kama. She gives dukha to everybody.

'Vishwamitra told Ramachandra, "kill her without a second thought." Ramachandra obeyed.'

Other Ramayanas describe that Rama felt some hesitation at the thought of killing a woman. However, this was Rama and Krishna's destiny; Krishna also had to kill Putana. What can anybody do? In fact, Putana is a vritti of being related to another. It takes many forms. Nobody but Rama can destroy this vritti of antagonism. Ramachandra Bhagwan strung His bow and twanged it. The whole van resounded with the twang of Ramachandra's bow.

Tataka found this unbearable. She assumed a terrible form and rushed angrily to kill Rama. Bhagwan Rama pierced her chest with a single arrow. She fell to the ground, vomiting blood.

A beautiful Yakshini emerged from Tataka's shareer, wearing gold ornaments. This Yakshini had become a Rakshasi because of a shaap. She was liberated when Rama's arrow destroyed the Rakshasi shareer. She regained her original beautiful form and became Ramachandra's bhakta. She bowed down at His feet and went back to Swarga with His permission.

Vishwamitra was very pleased. There was a special reason for this. Ramachandra was highly learned; He was wise and strong. Had He let ahankara to come in the way of obeying His Guru's aagna, Vishwamitra would have understood that his student not yet fully mature. Ramachandra's instant obedience – *tatoati hrishtah parirabhya raamam* – pleased him. He embraced Rama lovingly and smelled His head in blessing. Then he became thoughtful.'

It is said that when Rama was fighting against Luv-Kush He thought to Himself, 'these boys are using the same weapons Vishwamitra had taught Me in secret. They must be Vishwamitra's descendants, or else My sons. They must have obtained these weapons as an inheritance, because Vishwamitra and I are the

only people who have this vidya. How else could the boys know these techniques?'

'Vishwamitra gave some thought to the matter and decided to give Rama the secret mantras that turned ordinary arrows to terrible missiles, including Brahmaji's invincible Brahmastra.

Baal Kanda

The Fifth Sarga

The Repression of Marich and Subahu and the Salvation of Ahalya.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Tatra kaamaashrame` ramye` kaanane` munisankule`,

ushitvaa rajaneeme`kaam prabhaate` prasthitaah shanaih. 5. 1

Siddhaashramam gataah sarve` siddhachaaranase`vitam,

vishvaamitre`na sandishtaa munayastannivaasinah. 5. 2

Poojaam cha mahateem chakroo raamalakshmanayordrutam,

shreeraamah kaushikam praaha mune`deekshaam pravishyataam. 5. 3

Darshayasva mahaabhaaga kutastau raakshasaadhamau,

tathe`tyuktvaa muniryashtummaare`bhe` munibhih saha. 5. 4

Madhyaanhe` dadrishaate` tau raaksasau kaamaroopinau,

maarichashcha subaahushcha varshantau sudhiraasthinee. 5. 5

Raamoapi dhanuraadaaya dvau baanau sandadhe` sudheeh,

aakarnaantam samaakrishya visasarja tayoh prithak. 5. 6

Tayore`kastu maareecham bhraamayachchhatayojanam,

paatayaamaasa jaladhau tadadbhutamivaabhat. 5.7

Dviteeyoagnimayo baanah subaahumajayatkshanaat,

apare` lakshmane`naashu hataastadanuyaayinah. 5. 8

Pushpaudhairaakirande`vaa raaghavam sahalakshmanam,

de`vadundubhayo ne`dustushtuvuh siddhachaaranaah. 5. 9

Vishvaamitrastu sampoojya poojaarham raghunandanam,

anke` nive`shya chaalingya bhaktyaa vaashpaakule`kshanah. 5. 10

Bhojayitvaa saha bhraatraa raamam pakvafalaadibhih,

puraanavaakyairmadhurairninaaya divasatrayam. 5. 11

Chaturthe`ahani sampraapte` kaushiko raamamabraveet,

raama raama mahaayagnam drashtum gachchhaamahe` vayam. 5 12

'Rama, Lakshman and Vishwamitra spent that night at the Kama Ashram in the district of Anga. There were many Rishis who lived there. They welcomed Vishwamitra and his young companions with respect and warmth. Then, they went on to Siddha Ashram and did an elaborate puja of Ramachandra.'

Puja does not mean applying chandan and paste, and garlanding a revered person. It is a method of showing the respect and love in your hriday, and it is called *satkaara* – to honor. Whatever the custom of the place and time is, to honor the person you respect, is satkar.

'Shri Rama told Vishwamitra, "Maharaj, please take the diksha for the Yagna and do the sankalpa. Tell Me where Marich and Subahu are, so I can kill these Rakshasas."

The Muni started the Yagna. In the afternoon he saw the kama-roopi Rakshasas come and stand before him. Marich and Subahu – *varshantau rudhiraasthinee* – showered blood and bones on the fire of the Yagna to ruin its purity. Rama picked up His dhanush. He placed two arrows on the string and let them go. The two arrows simultaneously shot the two Rakshasas, and both arrows achieved their purpose.'

Dvishsharam naabhisandhatte` - Ramachandra Bhagwan does not use two arrows to kill one person. *Dvirdadaati na chaartibhyah* – He does not give daan twice to the same person; the daan He gives is enough to meet the needs of the person lifelong. To keep a man needy, so he has to go on asking, is not a good thing. *Raama dvirnaabhibhaashate`* - Rama does not repeat Himself. He says what He wants to, once, conclusively and succinctly. The Valmiki Ramayana describes Rama's gunas. *Dvishsharam naabhisandhatte`* - He does not need a second arrow for the same target.

'One baan hit Marich, turned him round, and threw him into the sea a hundred yojans away. The other had the power of agni; it burned Subahu to ashes. Lakshmanji destroyed the Rakshasas who were their followers. The Devtas showered flowers on Rama-Lakshman from above. The Devtas' kettle drums began to beat and the Siddha-Chanar – the divine minstrels – began to eulogize Bhagwan.

Vishwamitra honored both Rama and Lakshman. He made them sit on his lap – Rama on one knee and Lakshman on the other – and held them close. Vishwamitra's hriday was so full of prema that tears flowed from his eyes. He offered the two princes whatever fruits and nuts etc they had.

"He Rama," said Vishwamitra, "a great Yagna is being held at Janakpur. We will go there for its darshan."

Vide`haraajanagare` janakasya mahaatmanah,

tatra maahe`shvaram chaapamasti nyastam pinaakinaa. 5. 13

Drakshysi tvam mahaasattvam poojyase` janake`na cha,

ityuktvaa munibhistaabhyaam yayau gangaasameepagam. 5. 14

Gautamasyaashramam punyam yatraahalyaasthitaa tapah,

divyapushpafalope`tapaadapaih parive`shtitam. 5. 15

Mrigapakshiganairheenam naanaajantuvivarjitam,

drishtovaacha munim shreemaan raamo raajeevalochanah. 5. 16

Kasyaitadaashramapadam bhaati bhaasvachchhubham mahat,

patrapushpafalairyukttam jantubhih parivarjitam. 5. 17

Aahlaadayati me` che`to bhagavan broohi tattvatah. 5.18

Vishvaamitra uvaacha

Shrunu raama puraa vrittam gautamo lokavishrutah,

sarvadharmabhritaam shre`shthastapasaaraadhayan harim. 5. 19

Tasmai brahmaa dadau kanyaamahalyaam lokasundareem,

brahmacharye`na santushtah shushrooshanaparaayanaam. 5. 20

Tayaa saardhamihaavaatseedgdautamastapataam varah,

shakrastu taam gharshayitumantaram pre`psuranvaham. 5. 21

Kadaachinmunive`she`na gautame` nirgate` grihaat,

gharshayitvaatha niragaattvaritam munipyagaat. 5. 22

Drishtvaa yaantam svaroope`na munih paramakopanah,

paprachchha kastvam dushtaan mama roopadharoadhamah. 5. 23

Satyam broohi na che`dbhasma karishyaami na sanshayah,

soabraveedde`varaajoaham paahi maam kaamakinkaram. 5. 24

Kritam jugupsitam karma mayaa kutsitache`tasaa,

gautamah krodhataamraakshah shashaapa divijaadhipam. 5. 25

Yonilampata dushtaatmansahasrabhagavaanbhava,

shaptvaa tam de`varaajanam pravishya svaashramam drutam. 5. 26

Drishvaahalyaam ve`pamaanaam praanjalim gautamoabraveet,

dushte` tvam tishtha durvritte` shilaayaamashrame` mama. 5. 27

Niraahaaraa divaaraatrim tapah paramamaasthitaa,

aatapaanilavarshaadisahishnuh parame`shvaram. 5. 28

Dhyaayantee raamame`kaagramanasaa hridi sansthitam,

naanaajantuviheenoayamaashramo me` bhavishyati. 5. 29

E`vam varshasahasre`shu hyane`ke`shu gate`shu cha,

raamo daasharathih shreemaanaagamishyati saanujah. 5. 30

Yadaa tvadaashrayashilaam paadaabhyaamaakramishyati,

tadaiva dhootapaapaa tvam raamam sampoojya bhakttitah. 5. 31

Parikramya namskritya stutvaa shaapaadvimokshyase`,

poorvavanmama shushrushaam karishyasi yathaasukham. 5. 32

Ityuktvaa gautamah praagaadhdhhimavantam nagottamam,

tadaadyahalyaa bhootaanaamdrishyaa svaashrame` shubha`. 5. 33

Tava paadaarajahsprisham kaankshate` pavanaashanaa,

aaste`adyaapi raghushre`shtha tapo dushkaramaasthitaa. 5. 34

Paavayasva mune`rbhaaryaamahalyaam brahmanah sutaam,

ityuktvaa raaghavam haste` griheetvaa munipungavah. 5. 35

Darshayaamaasa chaahalyaamugre`na tapasaa sthitaam,

raamah shilaam pada sprishtvaa taam chaapashyattapodhanaam. 5. 36

“We are going to Videha-nagar, the Capital city of Raja Janak, to see the great Yagna that will be held there. Shankarji has kept his dhanush there. Come with us; see the power of this dhanush. Raja Janak will also do Your satkar,” said Vishwamitra.

Rama and Lakshman were interested in seeing any exceptional dhanush; they were Kshatriyas, after all! They questioned Vishwamitra eagerly, “how big is the dhanush? Who wielded it earlier? Are we permitted to pick it up and examine it? Was the previous user more valorous than us?’

All the people in Vishwamitra’s group walked to the bank of the Gangaji. They came to Gautam Muni’s Ashram. Ahalya stayed in a stone, doing tapasya. Divya purushas lived at the Ashram. There were trees and shrubs loaded with fruits and flowers, but there were no birds or animals. There were all the objects of bhoga, but nobody to avail of them.’

The Ishwara created this srishti to give sukha to the jeeva. This gross world is for giving bhoga to all beings, because every jeeva has a vasana for bhoga. His janma and janmantar – this loka and the lokas after this – is a result of these vasanas. It is as though Bhagwan created this loka to let jeevas fulfill their vasanas. When

the jeeva develops vairagya for bhoga, he turns towards the Paramatma. Until then, he goes on playing with the toys the Paramatma has given him.

'Shri Ramachandra asked Vishwamitra, "Maharaj, what is this? This Ashram is so beautiful, but why are there no birds or animals or people here? The sight of this Ashram gives Me anand. Vishwamitraji, this is a place of great luster. It seems as though I will get the darshan of a premi here."

Vishwamitraji said, "He Rama, the famous Gautam Muni lived here in earlier times. He had pleased Bhagwan with his tapasya – *tapasaaraadhyaya harim."'* Bhagwan gives the jeeva the bhoga of the jagat – *bhokttaaram yagnatapasaam*. Bhagwan's bhoga is to feed others, and practice self-restraint.

What does Bhagwan eat?

Bhagwan eats the Yagna-tapasya in the jeevan of the jeeva – *bhokttaaram yagnatapasaam.*

'"Gautamji did Bhagwan's aradhana by doing tapasya," explained Vishwamitra. "Brahmaji was pleased with him and gave him an outstandingly beautiful maiden for his wife. Her name was Ahalya."'

Ahani leeyate` iti – is called *ahalyaa.* Gautam was a dedicated Brahmachari. Brahmaji was pleased with his maintaining the vow of celibacy. Ahalya became Gautam's patni. When the husband is a great tapasvi, totally inclined towards nivritti, people observe the wife. In general the wife of a philosopher does not feel contented, and often becomes prey to other men.

Indra is the Raja of the Devtas. He has great grandeur and great power. He indulges in bhoga of every kind.

'Vishwamitra continued, "Indra assumed the form of Gautam Muni and went to Ahalya when the Muni had gone out. He indulged in carnal pleasure with her. Gautam Rishi came to the Ashram just as Indra was leaving. Seeing Indra, who has assumed the Rishi's form, he understood the matter, and was very angry. "Who are you? How did you assume my form and come here?"

Indra fell at his feet. “I am Devraj Indra, but I have become the servant of a servant! I am the servant of my own Kama. Please protect me! I have done something very bad. My mana has become debased.”

Gautam Rishi gave a shaap to Indra.’

What was the shaap?

The shaap was that Indra’s shareer would be covered with the marks of a woman’s private parts – *sahsara bhagavaanme`va.*

*‘*After giving a shaap to Indra Gautam Rishi went into the Ashram. Ahalya stood there, trembling with fear because of the paapa she had done. Gautam Rishi rebuked her. “Wicked woman! Your sheel-svabhava are not good. Remain in this rock without food and water, and do severe tapasya for thousands of years. After that, Dashrath’s son Rama will come here. You will get the touch of His feet. Your paapa will be destroyed.

When Rama comes, do His puja. Do His parikrama and prostrate before Him. I will come to you and you can do my seva happily again, as you have been doing.”’

You see, the shaap that was given to Indra could not be taken back. The offence was Indra’s. It could not be reversed. The shaap Gautam Rishi gave Ahalya to make her pavitra was a varadaan that she would get Bhagwan Himself.

‘”To get Bhagwan was not a shaap; it was a varadaan. That same Ahalya lives in an invisible form in Gautam’s Ashram. He Rama, she wants the touch of the dust of Your feet. She is doing a very severe tapasya. Please make her pavitra. She is Brahmaji’s daughter.”

Shri Rama felt diffident about touching Ahalya. Vishwamitra caught His hand – *ityuktvaa raaghavam haste` griheetvaa munipungavah*.

Vishwamitra said, “she is a rock. Touch her with Your toe.” Ramachandra obeyed. His hesitation had not been because of the thought that He had come in the form of a Kshatriya, whereas ‘Ahalya is Brahmaji’s daughter and Gautam Rishi’s patni – how can I touch her with My foot?’

When Ahalya emerged from the rock, Ramachandra said:

Nanaama raaghvoahalyaam raamoahamiti chaabraveet,

tato drishtvaa raghushre`shtha peetakaushe`yavaasasam. 5. 37

Chaturbhujam shankhachakragadaapankajadhaarinam,

dhanurbaanadharam raamam lakshmane`na samanvitam. 5. 38

Smitavaktram padmane`tram shreevatsaankitavakshasam,

neelamaanikyasankaasham dyotayantam disho dasha. 5. 39

Drishtvaa raamam ramaanaatham harshavisfaarite`kshanaa,

gautamasya vachah smritvaa gnaatvaa naarayanam param. 5. 40

"Mata, I am Rama. I bow down to you."

No consideration that Ahalya was a stree, a manushya, and a paapini was there in Rama. He first did namaskara to Ahalya, and then told her who He was. Ahalya saw Bhagwan, blue-hued, wearing a yellow stole, four armed, holding His Shankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma.'

Bhagwan's chaturbhuj roop signifies that He gives all four Purusharthas to His bhaktas. It also signifies that the Atma is one in all four states of the Turiya, sushupti, svapna and jagrit. It is this Atma that does the bhoga of all. That is why He is called *chaturbhuja*, meaning, four-armed. The Shankha He holds means that He gives shanti. The Chakra means that He makes changes in the wheel of Time. The Gada means that He is the one who bestows kalyan with the vani, and holding a Padma means that the one Bhagwan Vishnu gives His own hriday to His bhaktas.

'That Bhagwan Rama manifested before Ahalya. Lakshman was with Him, smiling. Ramachandra's eyes were like lotus petals. His luster spread effulgence in all four directions. Anand brimmed in His eyes.

Ahalya thought of what a wonderful varadaan her patidev, Gautam Muni, had given her.

Sampoojya vidhivadraamamardhyaadibhiraninditaa,

harshaashrujalane`traantaa dandavatpranipatya saa. 5. 41

Utthaaya cha punardrishtvaa raamam raajeevalochanam,

pulakaankitasarvaangaa giraa gadgadyailata. 5. 42

Ahalya did Bhagwan's puja by offering arghya etc.'

Shankar Bhagwan says that Ahalya is *aninditaa* – she is beyond reproach. There is nothing about her that anyone can speak ill of. There is no dosha in her.

'Ahalya did Bhagwan's puja and prostrated before Him. Her eyes were filled with tears and she tingled with prema and bhakti. She began to do His stuti; her voice was husky with emotion.'

Ahalya's stuti is among the most beautiful stutis in the Adhyatma Ramayana.

Ahalyovaacha

Ahau kritaarthaasmi jagannivaasa te` paadaabjasamlagnarajah kanaadaham,

sprishaami yatpadmajashankaraadibhirvimrigyate` radhindhitamaanasaih sadaa. 5. 43

Aho vichitram tava raama che`shtitam manushyabhaave`na vimohitam jagat,

chalasyajasram charanaadivarjitah sampoorna aanandamayoatimaayikah. 5. 44

Yatpaadapankajaparaagapavitragaatraa bhaageerathee bhavavirinchimukhaanpunaati,

saakshaatsa e`va mama drigvishayo yadaaste` kim varnyate` mama puraakritabhaagadhe`yam. 5. 45

Martyaavataare` manujaakritim harim raamaabhidhe`yam ramaneeyade`hinam,

dhanurdharam padmavishaalalochanam bhajaami nityam na paraanbhajishye`. 5. 46

Ahalya eulogized Ramachandra. "He Jagannivasa! You are present in the whole world. It is wonderful; it is amazing! I have become krita-kritya! I have been touched by a speck of the dust of Your lotus-feet! That, which is difficult to

obtain for even Shankar, Brahma, and other Devtas, which great Mahatmas strive to obtain, is given to me!

Rama! Your leela is marvelous! You are deluding this srishti by becoming a manushya. You walk without feet and spread Maya even though You are pure anand. Gangaji – whose very form is pavitra – is purified by the pollen of Your lotus-feet. As Bhagirathi, she purifies Shankar, Brahma, and others. It is the same You who has come here and stand before me!

How can I describe this rising of my good fortune? The Mahatmas get the sakshatkara of the Paramatma in the form of the Atma. Some people get the Paramatma's sakshatkara by doing dhyana. It is a different thing to do puja in dhyana, and altogether a different thing to get Bhagwan's sakshatkara in the form of the Atma, to become His sharanagata and surrender completely to Him."'

Nobody can surrender totally to Bhagwan without the anubhav that He abides within, in the form of the Atma. The experience of the antaryami is sharanagati. The sakshatkara of His being the Atma is the anubhav of the Brahman. Puja done in dhyana, in the mana, of Bhagwan's murti is manas-puja. It is prema.

'"However, this Rama who has manifested in the form of a manushya – *raagaabhidhe`yam ramaneeyade`hinam* – is supremely beautiful, holding a dhanush in His hand, with large lotus-like eyes. He is the only one whose bhajan I do. The dust of His lotus-feet is something that even the Vedas seek!

Yatpaadapankajarajah shrutibhirvimrigyam yannaabhipankajabhavah kamalaasanashcha,

yannaamasaararasiko bhagavaanpuraaristam raamachandramanisham hridi bhaavayaami. 5. 47

Yasyaavataaracharitaani virinchiloke` gaayanti naaradamukhaa bhavapadmajaadyaah,

aanandajaashruparishikttakuchaagraseemaa vaageeshvaree cha tamaham sharanam prapadye`. 5. 48

Soayam paraatmaa purushah puraana e`kah svayamjyotirananta aadyah,

maayaatanum lokavimohaneeyaam dhatte` paraanugraha e`sha raamah. 5. 49

Ayam hi vishvodbhavasamyamaanaame`kah svamaayaagunabimbito yah,

virinchivishpaveeshvaranaamabhe`daam dhatte` svatantrah paripoorna aatmaa. 5. 50

Namoastu te` raama tavaanghripankajam shriyaa dhritam vakshasi laalitam priyata,

aakraantame`ke`na jagatrayam puraa dhye`yam muneendrairabhimaanavarjitaih. 5. 51

The Shrutis seek the dust of Bhagwan's charan-kamal. Brahma appeared from His lotus-like naval. Bhagwan Shankar chants His name; loves His name. I do bhavna of that Ramachandra in my hriday. Naradji and others sing about His charitra in Brahmaloka, with tears flowing down their faces, Even Saraswati Devi herself, who is the presiding Devta of the vani, has tears in her eyes when she thinks of Him. I am in the sharan of that Rama.

This same Paramatma Purusha has assumed the form of a manushya with the shakti of His own self-effulgent Maya, to shower anugraha."'

What is Rama?

Rama is supreme anugraha. Supreme anugraha has manifested as Rama to benefit people. It is He who becomes Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. Laxmiji stays on His chest. It was He who went to Bali's Yagna and measured all three lokas with one foot-length.

'"You, Rama, are the adi; You are the jagat-swarup. You are the ashray of the jagat. You are the one who abides in all, and yet You are separate from all.

Jagatamaadibhootastvam jagattvam jagadaashrayah,

sarvabhoote`shvayoktta e`ko bhaati bhavaanparah. 5. 52

Omkaaravaachyastvam raama vaachaamavishayah pumaan,

vaachyavaachakabhe`de`na bhavaane`va jaganmayah. 5. 53

You are the meaning of the Omkara. Vani cannot describe You. You are that, which is spoken of, and You are also the one who speaks. A person cannot grasp the Ishwara if he catches any one of these facts. He may catch what he wants for dhyana, but Bhagwan is the subject and He is separate from the jagat. He is the meaning of the word 'oum' and He is beyond being described with words.

Kaaryakaaranakartritvafalasaadhanabhe`datah,

e`ko vibhaasi raama tvam maayayaa bahuroopaayaa. 5. 54

Tvanmayaamohitadhiyastvaam na jaananti tattvatah,

maanusham tvaabhimanyante` maayinam parame`shvaram. 5. 55

Aakaashavattvam sarvatra bahirantargatoamalah,

asango hyachalo nityah shuddho buddhah sadavyayah. 5. 56

Yoshinmoodhaahamagnaa te` tattvam jaane` katham vibho,

tasmaatte` shatasho raama namaskuryaamananyadheeh. 5. 57

De`va me` yatra kutraapi sthitaayaa api sarvadaa,

tvatpaadakamale` sakttaa bhakttire`va sadaastu me`. 5. 58

All perceptions, like pots and pieces of cloth, stree-purush, etc, are the karya the effect. They are the effect or the result; not the karana. The karana – the cause – is Prakriti. Starting from the pancha bhoota to the karta, the fruit of the karma, and the method of obtaining these fruits, everything is caused by Prakriti. In all these forms it is the one Rama who is seen in the separate forms.

The things that are seen are different, and the manushya who sees them gets bound by them. He sees other people as paapis and becomes a paapi himself. This is the play of Maya. The play of Maya is just that a manushya becomes a paapi by looking at someone he believes to be a paapi, whether the person is indeed a paapi or not, is beside the point. Maya's leela is not easy to escape from. It deludes and distorts.

People, whose buddhi is deluded with Maya, do not know the Paramatma. They consider a sack of skin to be a manushya. Rama is like the akash; nirmal within

and nirmal without. He is emotionally unattached, unmoving, eternal, pure, enlightened, liberated, Sat, and avyaya."

Ahalya said, "what do I know, Maharaj, about what You are? I just bow down to You a hundred times. Let me always have bhakti for Your lotus-feet, no matter where I go.

Namaste` purushaadhyaksha namaste` bhakttavatsala,

namaste`stu hridheeke`sha naaraayana namostu te`. 5. 59

Bhavabhayaharame`kam bhaanukotiprakaasham karadhritasharachaapam kaalameghaavabhaasam,

kanakarichiravastram ratnavatkundalaadhyam kamalavishadane`tram saanujam raamameede`. 5. 60

Stutvaivam purusham saakshaadraaghavam puratah sthitam,

parikramya pranamyaashu saanugnaataa yayau patim. 5. 61

He Bhakta-vatsal! He leader of all, I do namaskara at Your feet. He Rishikesh! He Narayana! I prostrate before You. I do Your and Lakshman's stuti. The fear of this sansara is removed by doing this. Your effulgence is like that of a thousand suns. You hold a dhanush-baan in Your hands. Your shareer is the hue of dark rain-clouds. You are wearing a pitambara, and Your ear rings are studded with precious gems."

Ahalya eulogized Ramachandra with these words. She completed her stuti and bowed down to Him. Gautam Rishi arrived and met her.'

The Valmiki Ramayana says that Gautam Rishi came there at that moment.

Ahalyayaa kritam stotram yah pathe`dbhakttisanyutah,

sa muchyate`akhilaih paapaih param brahmaadhigachchhati. 5. 62

Putraadyarthe` pathe`dbhaktyaa raamam hridi nidhaaya cha,

samvatsare`na labhate` bandhyaa api suputrakam. 5. 63

Sarvaankaamaanavaapnoti raamachandraprasaadatah. 5. 64

‘Whoever reads this stotra of Ahalya with prema becomes free of all paapa, and obtains the Parabrahm.’

No manushya is small and nobody is a paapi before the anugraha of the Paramatma. It is the person who is unable to see the Paramatma’s kripa, His anugraha, who is blind. He sees only the bad things in the sansara.

A manushya who is unable to see the Paramatma can see neither His leela, nor His roop. He sees only the bad things in the world.

‘All paapa is removed by reciting this stuti. If a person recites it with a sakama bhava, with a desire for some worldly object, while thinking about Rama, even a barren woman can get a son within a year. Every desire can be fulfilled. That is the glory of Shri Ramachandra!

Brahmaghno gurutalpagoapi purushah ste`yee suraapoapi vaa maatribhraatrivihinsakoapi satatam bhogaikabadhdhhaaturah,

nityam stotramidam japan raghupatim bhaktyaa hradistham smaran dhyaayanmukttimupaiti kim punarasau svaachaarayuktto narah. 5. 65

The fact is, if a person is so competent that he can cross over the sea of this sansara by his own karmas, nothing much needs to be done for him.

‘Apane` karmase` utare`nge` paara, to pai hum karataara tum kaahe`ke`?’

(If I am to cross over the sea of the sansara by my own karmas, then, O Bhagwan, I am the ferryman, not You!)

People who have the capacity to achieve Moksha by their own sadhan-bhajan need little help from the Paramatma. This power of stotra is such that a person who does japa of it, he will get bhakti even if he is a killer of a Brahmin, insults his Guru, beats his mother and brother, and addicted to bhoga. Even such people get bhakti and Bhagwan’s darshan.

Baal Kanda

The Sixth Sarga

The Wedding

Soota uvaacha

Vishvaamitroatha tam praaha raaghavam sahalakshmanam,

gachchhaamo vatsa mithilaam janake`naabhipaalitaam. 6. 1

Drishtvaa kratuvaram paashchaadayodhyaam gantumarhasi,

ityuktvaa prayayau gangaamuttartum saharaaghavah,

tasminkaale` naavike`na nishiddho raghunandanah. 6. 2

Naavika uvaacha

Kshaalayaami tava paadapankajam naatha daarudrishadoh kimantaram,

maanusheekaranachoornamasti te` paadayoriti katha pratheeyasee. 6. 3

Paadaambujam te` vimalam hi kritvaa pashchaatparam teeramaham nayaami,

noche`ttaree sadyuvatee male`na syaachche`dvibho viddhi kutumbahaanih. 6. 4

Ityuktvaa kshaalitau paadau param teeram tato gataah,

kaushiko raghunaathe`na sahito mithilaam yayau. 6. 5

Vide`hasya puram praatarrishivaatam samaavishat,

praaptam kaushikamaakarya janakoatimudaanvitah. 6. 6

Poojaadravyaani samgrihya sopaadhyaayah samaayayau,

dandavatpranipatyaatha poojaayaamaasa kaushikam. 6. 7

Paprachchha raaghavau drishtvaa sarvalakshanasanyutau,

dyotayantau dishah sarvaashchandrasooryaavivaaparau. 6. 8

Kasyaitau narashaardoolau putrau de`vasutopamau,

manahpreetikarau me`adya naranaaraayanaaviva. 6. 9

Pratyuvaacha munih preeto harshayan janakam tadaa,

putrau dasharathasyaitau bhraatarau raamalakshmanau. 6. 10

Makhasamrakshanaarthaaya mayaaneetau pituh puraat,

aagachchhan raaghavo maarge` taatakaam vishvaghaatineem. 6. 11

Share`naike`na hatavaannodito me`ativikramah,

tato mamaashramam gatvaa mama yagnavihinsakaan. 6. 12

Subaahupramukhaanhatvaa maareecham saagare`akshipat,

tato gangaatate` punye` gautamasyaashramam shubham. 6. 13

Gatvaa tatra shilaaroopaa gautamasya vadhooh sthitaa,

paadapankajasamsparshaatkritaa maanusharoopinee. 6. 14

Drishtvaahalyaam namaskritya tayaa samyakprapoojitah,

idaaneem drashtukaamaste` grihe` maahe`shvaram dhanuh. 6. 15

Poojitam raajabhih sarvairdrishamityanushushruve`,

ato darshaya raaje`ndra shaivam chaapamanuttamam,

drishtvaayodhyaam jigamishuh pitaram drashtumichchhati. 6. 16

Ityuktto muninaa raajaa poojaarhaaviti poojayaa,

poojayaamaasa dharmagno vidhidrishte`na karmanaa. 6. 17

Tatah sampre`shyaamaasa mantrinam buddhimattaram,

Janaka uvaacha

Sheeghramaanaya vishve`shachaapam raamaaya darshaya. 6. 18

Tato gate` mantrivare` raajaa kaushikamabraveet,

yadi raamo dhanurdhritvaa kotyaamaaropaye`dgunam. 6. 19

Tadaa mayaatmjaa seetaa deeyate` raaghavaaya hi,

tathe`ti kaushikoapyaaha raamam samveekshya sasmitam. 6. 20

Sheeghram darshaya chaapagryam raamaayaamitate`jase`,

e`vam bruvati mauneesha aagataashchaapavaahakaah. 6. 21

Chaapam griheetvaa balinah panchasaahasrasankhyakaah,

ghantaashatasamaayukttam manivajraadibhooshitam. 6. 22

Darshayaamaasa raamaaya mantree mantrayataam varah,

drishtvaa raamah prahashtaatmaa baddhvaa parikaram dridham. 6. 23

Griheetvaa vaamahaste`na leelayaa tolayan dhanuh,

Aaropayaamaasa gunam pashyatsvakhilaraajasu. 6. 24

Eeshadaakarshayaamaasa paaninaa dakshane`na sah,

babhanjaakhilahritsaaro dishah shabde`na poorayan. 6. 25

Dishashcha vidishashchaiva svargam martyam rasaatalam,

tadadbhutamabhoottatra de`vaanaam divi pashyataam. 6. 26

Aachchhaadayantah kusumairde`vaah stutibhireedire`,

de`vadundubhayo ne`durnritushchaapsaroganaah. 6. 27

Dvidhaa bhangam dhanurdrishtvaa raajaalingya raghoodvaham,

vismayam le`bhire` seetaamaataroantahpuraajire`. 6. 28

Seetaa svarnamayeem maalaam griheetvaa dakshine` kare`,

smitavaktraa svarnavarnaa sarvaabharanabhooshitaa. 6. 29

Mukttaahaaraih karnapatraih kvanachcharananoopuraa,

dukoolaparisamveetaa vastraantarvyanjitastanee. 6. 30.

Raamasyopari nikshipya smayamaanaa mudam yayay,

tato mumudire` sarve` raajadaaraa svalankritam. 6. 31

Gavaakshajaalarandhre`bhyo drishtvaa lokavimohanam,

tatoabraveenmunim raajaa sarvashaastravishaaradah. 6. 32

Bho kaushika munishre`shtha patram pre`shaya satvaram,

raajaa dasharathah sheeghramaagachchhatu saputrakah. 6. 33

Vivaahaartham kumaaraanyaam sadaarah sahamantribhih,

tathe`ti pre`shayaamaasa dritaamstvaritavikramaan. 6. 34

Te` gatvaa raajashaardoolam raamashre`yo nyave`dayan,

shrutvaa raamakritam raajaa harshe`na mahataaplutah. 6. 35

Mithilaagamanaarthaaya tvarayaamaasa mantrinah,

gachchhantu mithilaam sarve` gajaashvarathapattayah. 6. 36

Rathamaanaaya me` sheeghram gachchhamyadyaiva maa chiram,

vasishthastvagrato yaatu sadaarah sahitoagrabhih. 6. 37

Raamamaatrih samaadaaya munirme` bhagavaan guruh,

e`vam prasthaapya sakalam raajarshirvipulam ratham. 6. 38

Mahatyaa se`nayaa saardhamaaruhya tvarito yayau,

aagatam raaghavam shrutvaa raajaa harshasamaakulah. 6. 39

Pratyujjagaama janakah shataanandapurodhasaa,

yathokttapoojayaa poojyam poojayaamaasa satkritam. 6. 40

Raamastu lakshmane`naashu vavande` charanau pituh,

tato hrishto dasharatho raamam vachanamabraveet. 6. 41

'Vishwamitra said, "Rama, Lakshman, come; let us proceed to Janakpur, see the Yagna, and then go to Ayodhya."'

It is said that if the *mahardharatna* – the invaluable gem – is to be obtained, you have to go yourself to get it. Vishwamitra went to Ayodhya to get Rama, but Rama Himself went to Janakpur to get Sitaji! Therefore, Sitaji is even greater than Ramji. Or else, you can say that Sitaji's attraction was such that Ramji was drawn to her.

Here, it seems that He never knew that He would get married in Mithila. Vishwamitraji told Him, 'come, see the Yagna there, and then You can go back to Ayodhya.'

They walked on and came to the bank of the Gangaji. There is place there, called Gajipur Jamania, which was the city of Parashuram's father, Jamadagni. A little further is Gadhipur, which was the city of Vishwamitra's father. Close by is the district of Baksar, where Vishwamitra had his Ashram. Going from there to Janakpur one has to cross over to the other side of Gangaji.

The boatman refused to ferry them across the river. Goswami Tulsidasji has given this episode to the time when Rama, Sita and Lakshman went to the vanavas. However, Ahalya's salvation had just been done, so it is fitting for this episode to be given here. Shri Ramachandra released Ahalya from her shaap, and then He went ahead and came to the Gangaji, where they had to go across.

'No-no!' said the boatman. 'I refuse to let You step into my boat like that. What difference is there between wood and stone? When the dust of Your feet can turn a stone into a woman, it won't be surprising if it also turns my boat into a woman. I will first wash Your feet, and then take You across. If my boat were to become a young woman, I would lose my livelihood. How will I feed my family?'

Rama was still a little in the past, and the katha went ahead.

Ityuktvaa kshaalitau paadau param teeram tato gataah.

One Mahatma told me that when Shri Rama began to live in the Dandak van, Shri Janakiji prepared the fruits and flowers and cooked the food. Lakshman went out and fetched everything. Ramachandra ate in comfort. This was observed by the Rishis who lived there. They thought, 'we are on our own. We have to do bhajan as well as fetch and cook our own food. This disrupts our bhajan. It would be good if we had a wife who would do all the work and we

could do bhajan in peace. But, how can this be achieved? Oh! Let each one of us fetch a large stone and get it touched by Ramachandra's feet.'

Ramachandra asked the Rishis, 'what is it, My brothers?'

'We have brought these stones because we want You to touch them with Your charan. A stree will come out of each stone. We will all have wives to look after us.'

Ramachandra thought, 'this is quite problematical! I have come to establish the Varna-Ashram social system. According to what these Mahatmas have planned, the Sanyas Ashram will disappear completely!'

Ramachandra inspired His Yoga Maya in such a way that Ravana abducted Sitaji. Then, He began to weep and lament for her. He blundered among the trees and shrubs in a frenzy of despair, asking them if they had seen the doe-eyed Sita. Seeing this, the Rishis changed their minds about getting a wife. 'If a man has to weep like this for his wife, we are better off as we are,' they said.

'Rama told the Kevat, "do whatever you want to ensure the safety of your boat." The Kevat washed His feet and carried Him on to the boat, and ferried them across the Gangaji. They went to Janakpur.

Vishwamitraji went to an area where Rishis were staying. He did not go to Janakji's palace. It is not proper that a tyagi Mahatma who lives in the vana and does bhajan, to go to the house of a Grihastha uninvited. It is not in keeping with Valmikiji's swarup to just go to anybody's house. And then, Vishwamitra had come with the Swami of the whole world! It was not to his liking that Shri Rama should go to Janak's palace and bow down to him.

Janak was informed of the arrival of Vishwamitra and his group. He went at once, accompanied by his purohit, taking all the items for his puja. He did dandavat pranam to Vishwamitra and did his puja.'

In Goswami Tulsidasji's description of this episode Rama and Lakshman had gone to collect flowers when Janak came to Vishwamitra. When they came back, everybody stood up at the sight of Rama, including Raja Janak. This was a reaction of the respect they felt when they saw Him. Janakji asked Vishwamitra, 'Maharaj, these two young men light up the place with their natural brightness.

They are radiant, like the sun and the moon. They have all the auspicious signs of greatness; who are they? They look as though they were sons of some great Devta – they are like lions among men! Just the sight of them makes me feel elated, as though Nara-Narayana have manifested!'

Goswamiji has written that Janak was a Brahmagnani. In spite of this, his mana was captivated at the sight of Rama. This shows Rama's greatness.

Sahaja viraaga roopa mana moraa, thakita hata jimi chandra chakoraa,

inhahin bilokata ati anuraagaa, barabasa brahm sukhahin mana tyaagaa.

(The natural vairagya of my mana is gone. My mana is now fixed on Rama the way the mana of the mythical bird called chakora is fixed on the Chandrama. I feel such prema for him that my mana has given up the natural sukha of being established in the Brahman.)

'The Brahman is a member of our household; He is our swarup even if we don't focus on Him. Let me take the anand of these two boys just now,' thought Janak.

'Muni Vishwamitra made the introductions. "These two are Rama and Lakshman, sons of Raja Dashrath."

He did not say that they are the Parameshwara; he only said that they had come from Ayodhya to his Ashram, to protect his Yagna from the Rakshasas. He also told Raja Janak that Rama had killed the Rakshasi Tataka with just a single arrow. "*Nodito me`ativikramah* – He killed her at my aagna." Vishwamitra wanted to make it clear why Rama killed Tataka.

"After killing Tataka, Rama and Lakshman came to my Ashram. They killed Subahu and the other Rakshasas who destroyed my Yagna. Rama threw Marich into the sea far away.

After that, we came to the Ashram of Gautam Muni beside the Gangaji. Gautam's patni had been turned into a stone; Rama touched her with His lotus-feet and she regained her form of a woman. Ramachandra has done a benefit to the purohit."

Janak's purohit was Shatanandaji; Ahalya was his mother. When a person wants to get married, it is good if the purohit who conducts the marriage ceremony is

favorably inclined. Shatanandaji felt deep gratitude for Shri Rama. “Rama has liberated my mother from the shaap. I will certainly conduct the marriage ceremony for Him,” he thought.

Vishwamitra told them openly about Ahalya. Janakji did Rama’s puja with the full ritual. Vishwamitra told Janak, “Rama has come to your place for the darshan of Maheshwara Shivaji’s dhanush, and do its puja. He has heard that great Rajas come here to get the darshan of this great dhanush and do its puja. So, please show Him this wonderful dhanush. He will have the darshan and then go back to Ayodhya, because He is eager to meet His father.”

Vishwamitraji did not say anything about breaking the dhanush and Sitaji marrying Rama. It was in his mind, but all he voiced was Ramji’s coming because of His interest in the dhanush.

Raja Janak said, “both Rama and Lakshman are worthy of puja – *poojaarhaaviti* – they are exceptional purushas. I should offer them arghya and wash their feet.”’

Poojaayaamaasa dharmagno vidhidrishte`na karmanaa – the Shastras give the method of honoring an esteemed guest. The host should bring a cow before the guest, say respectful words, wash his feet, etc.

Paadya means washing the feet. *Arghya* means pouring water for the guest to wash his hands. *Aachamaneeya* means offering water for the guest to rinse and wash his face. If he needs a bath, the host should make the necessary arrangements, and present him with new clothes. Incense should be offered. This was how the ritual welcome of a revered person was done. It was called ‘puja’.

‘Janakji told his Ministers to arrange for the dhanush to be brought there. When the others had gone Vishwamitra told Janakji, “Maharaj, it is right that Rama-Lakshman will do the darshan of Shivaji’s wonderful dhanush. And, if Rama strings this dhanush I can arrange for Him to marry your daughter Sita.”

Vishwamitraji smiled at Ramachandra, and continued. “But, let us first see the dhanush! Shri Ramachandra is very gifted; who know what He will do?”

Five thousand men were needed to move the carrier on which the dhanush was kept. The dhanush was studded with diamonds and rubies. Lots of belles, fixed on it, chimed when it was moved.

It is a method of Mahatmas to keep their thoughts to themselves. This is a rare skill. The Ministers invited Rama to come outside, and see the dhanush. Ramji was very happy to see it. He tightened His waistband and picked up the dhanush effortlessly, with His left hand. Then, He strung the bow-string – *aaropayaamaasa gunam pashyatsvakhilaraajasu.*

A large number of Rajas had already come to Janakpur for the Dhanush-Yagna. They were stunned to see Ramachandra lit up and string the dhanush so easily. As soon as Rama pulled the bow-string, the dhanush broke into two.'

See what leela this is!

'The noise of the dhanush breaking reverberated in all directions on this prithivi, in Swarga, and in Patala. The Devtas were wonderstruck. They showered flowers on Rama. Their kettledrums began to play and the Apasras began to dance.

Janak embraced Shri Ramachandra. Sita's mother marveled that such a tender youth could achieve such a feat. Sitaji came, with a golden garland in her right hand. She was smiling. Her shareer glimmered like gold. She was wearing golden garments, and dangling pearl ear rings, and had anklets on her feet. *Vastraanatarvyanjitastanee* – she was on the threshold of womanhood. Her figure had begun to ripen.

Sitaji came forward and garlanded Ramachandra – *raamasyopari nikshipya smayamaanaa mudam yayau.* She walked with the grace of a swan. After garlanding Ramachandra she went back quickly.

Sitaji's expression was by no means grave – she had just outgrown childhood and was smiling. All the ladies of the Palace saw this sublime scene and were filled with anand.

Raja Janak was learned in all the Shastras. He told Vishwamitra, "Maharaj, the marriage must certainly take place now. A letter should be sent to Dashrath without delay, inviting him to come with his wives, sons and Ministers, for the wedding ceremony."'

That means, women were included in the barat in those days.

'Messengers were sent immediately. They came to Ayodhya and told Raja Dashrath about how easily Ramachandra lifted and strung Shivaji's dhanush, and how it broke when He pulled at the bowstring. And, then, He was garlanded by Sita.'

In South India, when a girl gets married, they use the word 'kalyan', and in Hindi speaking regions, they use the word 'mangal'. There is an excellent play, called 'Janaki Kalyan' on this episode. The book was printed in Mysore many years ago.

'Dashrath's joy knew no bounds when he got this news. He told his Ministers to make all the preparations to leave for Mithila that very day! "Vasishthaji will lead the barat. The agnis will be takes with us."'

The Bhagwat has several descriptions of how a Raja went forth to welcome a Mahatma who came to his city. The Raja, accompanied by his Guru-purohit went, carrying agni in a pot, to welcome and honor the Mahatma. This shows that the sacrificial fire was kept in transportable receptacles. The Mahatmas would carry agni with them when they travelled, so that they could do their daily homa.

"Let Rama's mothers go with the barat. The army should go also. There should be chariots for all," ordered Raja Dashrath.

When Janakji was told that raja Dashrath was approaching with the barat, he went forth to give them a royal welcome. He was accompanied by his purohit, Shatanandaji and other Brahmins. Rama and Lakshman came and bowed down to Dashrath.'

No further details are given.

'Dashrath told Rama,

Dishtyaa pashyaami te` raama mukham fullambujopamam,

mune`ranugrahaatsarvam sampannam mama shobhanam. 6. 42

Ityuktvaaghraaya moordhaanamaalingya cha punah punah,

harshe`na mahataavishto brahmaanandam gato yathaa. 6. 43

Tato janakaraaje`na mandire` sannive`shitah,

shobhane` sarvabhogaadhye` sadaarah sasutah sukhee. 6. 44

Tatah shubhe` dine` lagne` sumuhurte` raghoottamam,

aanayaamaasa dharmagno raamam sabhraatrikam tadaa. 6. 45

Ratnastambhasuvistaare` suvitaane` sutorane`,

mandape` sarvashobhaadhye` mukttaapushpafalaanvite`. 6. 46

Ve`davidbhih susambaadhe` braahmanaih svarnamrishitaih,

suvaasineebhih parito nishkakantheebhiraavrite`. 6. 47

Bhe`reedundubhinirghoshairgeetanrityaih samaakule`,

divyaratnaanchite` svarnapeethe` raamam nyave`shayat. 6. 48

Vasishtham kaushikam chaiva shataanandah purohitah,

yathaakramam poojayitvaa raamasyobhayapaarshvayoh. 6. 49

Sthaapayitvaa sa tatraagni jvaalayitvaa yathaavidhi,

seetaamaaneeya shobhaadhyaam naanaaratnavibhooshitaam. 6. 50

"Beta! What a fortunate day this is! I am getting the darshan of Your face, which is like a lotus in bloom! It is a day of great sukha! All the good that has come to me is *mune`ranughraatsarvam sampannam mama shobhanam* – the anugraha of the Muni! His ashirvad has made verything auspicious."

Dashrath embraced Rama with tears of joy running down his face. He was filled with sublime elation, as though he experienced Brahmananda!

Janak made excellent arrangements for the barat to stay comfortably. The people of Ayodhya felt very pleased to get every comfort and facility. The auspicious day of the marriage dawned when the positions of the planets were favorable according to the Hora Shastra.

Bhagwan Ramachandra was asked to come into the beautiful mandap built for the marriage ceremony. Rich bunting had been put up. Precious stoned studded

the pillars. Learned Brahmins – *ve`davidbhih susambaadhe` braahmanaih svarnabhooshittaih* – wearing gold ornaments, chanted the Vedic mantras of the ritual. The mandap was filled with learned Brahmins; it was not that just one or two Brahmins were appointed.

The ladies were all richly dressed. There was music and dancing. Bhagwan Ramachandra was asked to sit on a golden seat. Shatanandaji did puja of Vasishthaji and Kaushikji. (Vishwamitra is also called Kaushik) and others. Vishwamitra and Vasishtha sat on either side of Ramachandra.

The flames of the sacred agni flared as oblations were poured into it. Sitaji was escorted to the mandap – *shobhaadhyaa seetaa naanaa ratnavibhooshitaa* – wearing gorgeous garments and ornaments. She looked dazzlingly beautiful.

Sabhaaryo janakah praayaadraamam raajeevalochanam,

paadau prakshaalya vidhivattadapau moordhanyadhaarayat. 6. 51

Yaa ghritaa moordhna sharve`na brahmanaa munibhih sadaa,

tatah seetaam kare` ghritvaa saakshatodakapoorvakam. 6. 52

Raamaaya pradadau preetyaa paanigrahavidhaantah,

seetaa kamalapatraakshee svarnamukttaadibhooshitaa. 6. 53

Raja Janak came with his patni and they washed the feet of Shri Ramachandra.'

The feet of the bridegroom should be washed respectfully, as per our ancient custom.

'After washing Ramachandra's feet Raja Janak sprinkled the water on his head.'

This is also a Vedic tradition, because at the time of the marriage ceremony the bridegroom is considered to be the sakshat Narayana, and the bride sakshat Laxmi. The words are chanted – *'shreedhararoopime` tubhyam varaaya……'* and *'lakshamee roopimeemimaam kanyaam yathaashaktyalankritaam sampradade`* – I give my daughter, who is the swarup of Laxmi, ornamented to the best of my means, to you, who are the swarup of Narayana.' The father says this when he does kanya-daan.

'The jala with which Bhagwan's feet were washed was also sprinkled on the head of Brahmaji, Shankarji, and other Rishi-Munis. Janak also sprinkled the water with which he washed Ramachandra's feet. Then he took Sitaji's hand in his.'

This description tells us about the Vedic method of a marriage ceremony.

'Janak held some *akshat* - grains of uncooked rice in his hand – and some jala, and took Sitaji's hand in his, and made a sankalpa to give Sitaji's hand in marriage to Ramachandra.'

This is the ritual of *kanyaa-daan* – giving a daughter in marriage to her husband.

The *paani-grahan* means the bridegroom accepting and holding the hand of his bride. It means his pressing her hand a little. The mana is awakened. The bride's eyes go to the one who has pressed her hand.

'Ramachandra squeezed Sitaji's hand. Sitaji's hand was very delicate. She stiffened and looked at Him reproachfully. Then, she returned the pressure in response, to show her prema.

Deeyate`me` sutaa tubhyam preeto bhava raghoottama,

iti preete`na manasaa seetaam raamakare`arpayan. 6. 54

Mumoda janako lakshmeem ksheeraabdhiriva vishnave`,

urmeelaam chauraseem kanyaam lakshmanaaya dadau mudaa. 6. 55

Tathaiva shurtakeertim cha maandaveem bhraatrikanyake`,

bharataaya dadaave`kaam shatrughnaayaaparaam dadau. 6. 56

Chatvaaro daarasampannaa bhraatarah shubhalakshanaah,

vire`juh prabhayaa sarve` lokapaalaa ivaapare`. 6. 57

Tatoabraveedvasishthaaya vishvaamitraaaya maithilah,

janakah svasutodantam naarade`naabhibhaashitam. 6. 58

Raja Janak said, "I am doing daan of my putri to You. May you both live in anand always." This is the ashirvad Janak gave them. He was elated to give the hand of his daughter to Rama in marriage.'

Kanyadaan is a separate ritual and the actual ceremony of the marriage is a separate ritual. In the ritual of the kanyadaan the father dedicates his daughter to the bridegroom by placing her hand in his. After that, the bridegroom does the ritual of *paanigrahan* – accepting her hand. A homa called *laajaa homa* is done, with Agni Devta as the sakshi – meaning, the Agni Devta is a witness to the vows taken by the couple. There are a number of rules that are to be maintained. The mantras are beautiful, well-worth some study. There is one mantra in which the bridegroom puts his hand on the bride's shoulder, when she is on his right.

People don't know Sanskrit these days. Nor do they know anything about the Veda Shastra. As a result, the priest who conducts the marriage ceremony speaks the mantras on the behalf of both the bride and the bridegroom.

The bride's mantras are:

Mama vrate` te` hridayam dadhaami – I establish your hriday in my vrata.

Mama chittam anuchittam te` astu – may your mana walk alongside my mana.

Prajaapatishtvaa niyukttu mahyam – may the Ishwara appoint you for me.

The bridegroom's mantras are:

*Amoahamasmi saatvang…….*I am Vishnu and you are Laxmi.

Saamaaahamasmi rik tvam – I am the music of the Sama Veda and you are the Richa of the Rig Veda. Come, let the music and the poetry mingle and become one.

There are such amazing mantras; it is as though the entire *guhyashaattra* – the hidden aphorisms about love – are given in these shlokas.

Taave`hi vivahaavahai saha re`to dadhaavahai, prajaam prajanayaavahai putraan vindyaavahai bahoon te` santu jaradashtayah. The meaning of this mantra is, 'come; let us together bear the responsibilities of the Grihastha Ashram. The pati-patni are equal and enjoined, like two oxen attached to one plough, who work in tandem. We come together to share all the work. We will use our fertility together and have sons, and you will grow old along with me. We will become old together.'

These are mantras that give good fortune..

'Janakji gave Sitaji to Rama in marriage, the way Laxmi was given to Narayana in the Ksheera-sagar. Then, at his own initiative he gave Sita's younger sister Urmila's hand to Lakshman. He gave the hands of Mandavi and Shrutakirti – the daughters of his brother – to Bharat and Shatrughna respectively. All four brothers got wives. The scene was resplendent with beauty. *Lokapaalaa ivaapare`* - they looked like Devtas who ruled different realms.'

Lokapaalaa ivaapare` means the Devtas who preside over the jagrit loka, the svapna loka, the sushupti loka, and the Turiya loka. Just as the Parameshwara has four forms, all four brothers looked glorious.

'Janakji told Vasishthaji and Vishwamitraji about what he knew, and what Naradji had told him about Sitaji's charitra. He chose a good opportunity for this.

Yagnabhoomivishuddhyartham karshato laangale`na me`,

seetaamukhaatsamutpannaa kanyakaa shubhalakshanaa. 6. 59

Taamadraakshamaham preetyaa putrikaabhaavabhaavitaam,

arpitaa priyabhaaryaayai sharachchandranibhaananaa. 6. 60

E`kadaa naaradoabhyaagaadviviktte` mayi sansthite`,

ranayanmahateem veenaam gaayannaaraayanam vibhum. 6. 61

Poojitah sukhamaaseeno maamuvaacha sukhaanvitah,

shrunushva vachanam guhyam tavaabhyudayakaaranam. 6. 62

Paramaatmaa hrisheeke`sho bhakttaanugrahakaamyayaa,

de`vakaaryaarthasiddhyartham raavanashya vadhaaya cha. 6. 63

"When I started to plough the ground to make it shuddha for a Yagna, the front portion of the plough touched Sita. She emerged from the dharati – *kanyaa shubhalakshanaa.* She was a little baby girl with all auspicious signs."'

A mantra in the Shri Sukta describes farming.

Gandhadvaaraam duraadharshaam nityapushtaam kareeshineem,

eeshvareem sarvabhootaanaam taamihopahavaye`shriyam.

Who is this Laxmi, who is created in gobar?

She is the Krishi-Laxmi – the Laxmi of agriculture, herself, who manifests in the form of Sita.

Laxmiji is of two kinds – Bhudevi and Shridevi. The influence of both is wide-spread. Bhudevi manifested in the form of Sita. And Shridevi manifested in the form of Lakshman, and they decided to stay together. It is the same with Bharat and Hanuman. Bharat is on the side of Bhudevi. Lakshman and Sitaji are less compatible; Sitaji's bhakta is Bharatji. In this whole leela, the departments of Bhudevi and Shridevi are quite evident.

'Janakji said, "Sita emerged from the earth at the point where the shaft of the plough touched the earth. I considered her to be my daughter. I brought her home and entrusted her to my patni.

Then, one day Naradji came to our place, playing his veena and singing the name of Narayana. I welcomed him with the full rituals of welcome."

After the rituals of welcome were done and Naradji was sitting with me, pleased with the warmth of my welcome, he told me, 'Raja, listen carefully to what I am telling you. I have come to tell you something that has been kept secret; something that will elevate you to great heights. The Paramatma has manifested in the form of Rama, to do anugraha on His bhaktas, do the work of the Devtas, and kill Ravana. He is the sakshat Parameshwara, but He has come in the form of a manushya. He has come in four forms, as Dashrath's four sons. His Yoga-Maya has come to you in the form of Sita.

Jaato raama iti khyaato maayaamaanushave`shadrik,

aaste` dasharathirbhootvaa chaturdhaa parame`shvarah. 6. 64

Yogamaayaapi seete`ti jaataa vai tava ve`shmani,

atastvam raaghavaayaiva de`hi seetaam prayatnatah. 6. 65

Naanye`bhyah poorvamaaryaishaa raamasya paramaatmanah,

ityuktvaa prayayau de`vagatim de`vamunistadaa. 6. 66

Tadaarambhya mayaa seetaa vishnorlakshmeervibhaavyate`,

katham mayaa raaghavaaya deeyate` jaanakee shubha. 6. 67

Iti chintaasamaavishthah kaaryame`karmachintayam,

matpitaamahage`he` tu nyaasabritamidam dhanuh. 6. 68

Eeshvare`na puraa kshiptam puraadaahaadanantaram,

dhanure`tatpanam kaaryamiti chintya kritam tathaa. 6. 69

Seetaapaanigrahaarthaaya sarve`sham maananaashanam,

tvatprasaadaanmunishre`shtha raamo raajeevalochanah. 6. 70

The Mahapurush has described a leela to safeguard the secret of the unborn Tattva of the Ishwara, that Rama, Lakshman, Bharat and Shatrughna were not created from Dashrath's seed. They are not subject to birth, so they are created from a divine milky sweet called payas. They are not the offspring of any mortal father – they are sons who take birth without any human contribution. The fact is, they are not Dashrath's sons, although this is what it seems.

This Parameshwara stays in the form of the four sons of Dashrath, and His Yoga-Maya has manifested as Sita. Therefore – *atastvam raaghavaayaiva de`ha de`hi* – Sita is also *ayonijaa* – not subject to birth like other manushyas. Had she manifested n the same way as Ramachandra, people would not have accepted her as being ayonija. Ramachandra appeared from the divine charu, and Bhudevi appeared as Sita, through your plough. She has never, ever, been anybody else's patni – she is Rama's patni.' Devarshi Narad said all thins and went away.

Now, I see that Sita is sakshat Laxmi.

Every girl, born in every home, is a swarup of sakshat Laxmiji. She should never be disdained. She should be brought up with great respect and prema, for Narayana. She has to be given to Narayana, for His seva, dedicated to Him."

Janakji began to worry about how he could arrange Sitaji to get married to Shri Ramachandra. Then he thought of a way this could be done. "A divine dhanush has been kept with my grandfather, in trust, to keep in his house. This is no ordinary dhanush – Bhagwan Shankar had used it to kill the Asura called Tripur.

Bhagwan Vishnu Himself sat in the form of the baan that killed Tripurasura – *rathacharana-paanih shara iti.* All the Devtas abide in this divine dhanush. It was given to Shankarji for the specific purpose of killing Tripurasura.

After Tripurasura was killed, it was kept at our place. Let me take a vow that only a person who can put a bowstring on it, will be eligible for Sita's hand in marriage. Narayana-Vishnu is the only person who can do this. With this stipulation, Sita's panigrahan will be possible only with Ramachandra and no other, because no ordinary mortal can lift and string this mighty dhanush. This will also serve to break the abhiman of the powerful Rajas.

Aagatoatra dhanurdrashtam falito me` manorathah,

adya me` safalam janma raama tvaam saha seetayaa. 6. 71

E`kaasanastham pashyaami bhraajamaanam ravim yathaa,

tvatpaadaambudharo brahmaa srishtichakrapravartakah. 6. 72

Balistvatpaadasalilam dritvaabhooddivijaadhipah,

tvatpaadapaansusansparshaadahalyaa bhartrishaapatah. 6. 73

Sadya e`va vinirmukttaa koanyastvattoadhirakshitaa. 6. 74

He Vishwamitra – most superior among Munis! Rama, the lotus-eyed came here and did the darshan if the dhanush. My wish is fulfilled. My birth as a manushya is successful. Seeing Rama sitting beside Sita on the same asana makes me feel my life's purpose is achieved – *aadya me` safalam janma raama tvaam saha seetayaa.*

He Rama! You are seated on one asana with Sita – my putri has become Your equal! She has become Your other half, inseparable from You; you both are one. Seeing this I feel I am immersed in Paramananda!

Brahmaji places the jala of Your charan on his head, and becomes capable of creating this whole srishti. Bali got Your charan-amrita and became Indra. Ahalya was freed from her shaap by a touch of the dust of Your charan-kamal. There is no greater protector than You!"

Janakji began to do Ramachandra's stuti.

Yatpaadankajaparaagasuraagayogivrindairjitam bhavabhayam jitakaalachakraih,

yannaamakeertanaparaa jitadukhashokaa de`vaastame`va sharanam satatam prapadye`. 6. 75

Iti stutvaa nripah praadaadraaghavaaya mahaatmane`,

deenaaraanaam kotishatam rathaanaamayutam tadaa. 6. 76

Ashvaanaam niyutam praadaadgajaanaam shatshatam tathaa,

patteenaam lakshame`kam tu daaseenaam trishatam dadau. 6. 77

Divyaambaraani haaraanshcha mukttaaratnamayojjvalaan,

seetaayai janakah praadaatpreetyaa duhitarivatsalah. 6. 78

Vasishthaadeensusampoojya bharatam lakshmanam tathaa,

poojayitvaa yathaanyaayam tathaa dasharatham nripam. 6 79

Prasthaapayaamaasa nripo raajaanam raghusattamam,

seetaamaalingya rudateem maatarah saashrulochanaah. 6. 80

Svashrooshushrooshanaparaa nityam raamamanuvrataa,

paativratyamupaalambya tishtha vatse` yathaa sukham. 6. 81

Prayaanakaale` raghunandansya bhe`reemridangaanakatooryaghoshah,

svarvaasibhe`reeghanatooryashabdaih samoorchchhito bhootabhayankaroabhoota. 6. 82

Great Yogis took the dust of Your charan-kamal, and conquered the kaala-chakra. They crossed over the sea of this sansara, and the cycle of rebirth. He is the one whose name the Devtas take, to rise above the dukha of the sansara. He is Prabhu, and I am in His sharan."'

Bhagwan Shri Rama's powers as the Ishwara are described repeatedly in the Adhyatma Ramayana. This is not the case in the Valmiki Ramayana, where Rama is described as a manushya. For example, on the occasion of Rama's marriage,

the barat comes from Ayodhya. Gifts are exchanged, and Ramachandra is depicted as a manushya. In the Adhyatma Ramayana, however, He is shown clearly as being the Ishwara Himself. This is a Purana of bhakti and Gnan of the Ishwara.

'Then Janak presented Mahatma Raghav a million gold coins, thousands of chariots with horses, and a hundred thousand foot soldiers. He gave several maid-servants, gorgeous garments, and fabulous jewelry for Janakiji. His infinite prema for his daughter – *seetaayai janakah praadaatpreetyaa duhitrivatsalah* – made him go on showering her with all kinds of gifts.

Janak did puja of Vasishthaji, Lakshman, Bharat, Shatrughna and others, and gave everybody a loving send-off.

Sita was weeping when leaving Janakpur. Janakji embraced her. Her mother was also weeping. Janakji gave upadesh to Sita. "Look, Sita, when you go to Ayodhya, do seva of your mother-in-law. Always remember that Ramji's vrata is your vrata, and abide by His wishes. It is appropriate that you do what Ramji wants. From the viewpoint of seva, render seva to all your elders. Stay as a pativrata, and stay in anand. You will give anand to others when you have anand in your hriday."

Musical instruments were played at the time of the *vidaayee* – when the marriage party left the city. The people of Ayodhya were joyful as they proceeded to their city. When the barat had travelled some distance some ominous signs were observed.'

Goswami Tulsidasji has made an excellent arrangement of the events. It must be appreciated that by showing the first meeting between Rama and Sita in the garden, and then bringing Parashuramji into the story before the marriage, strengthening Rama-Sita's prema for each other, and then the rising of a fearsome obstacle, he showed how their prema was intensified and made more staunch. Obstacles increase prema; prema is not reduced by obstacles. These two pre-wedding episodes given by Goswamiji are very beautiful.

Parashuram's coming after the marriage is given in the Valmiki Ramayana as well as in the Adhyatma Ramayana.

Baal Kanda

The Seventh Sarga.

Meeting with Parashuram.

Soota uvaacha.

Atha gachchhati shreeraame` maithilaadyojanatrayam,

nimittaanyatighooraani dadarsha nripasattamah. 7. 1

Natvaa vasishtham paprachchha kimidam munipungava,

nimittaaneeha drishyante` vishamaani samantatah. 7. 2

Vasishthastamatha praaha bhayamaagaami soochyate`,

punarapyabhayam te`adya sheeghrame`va bhavishyati. 7. 3

Mrigaah pradakshinam yaanti pashya tvaam shubhasoochakaah,

itye`vam vadatastasya vavau ghorataroanilah. 7. 4

Mushnamshchakshoonshi sarve`sham paansuvrishtibhirardayan,

tato vrajandadarshaagre` te`joraashimupasthitam. 7. 5

Kotisooryaprateekaasham vidyutpunjasamaprbham,

te`joraashim dadarshaatha jaamadagnyam prataapavaan. 7. 6

Neelame`ghanibham praanshum jataamandalamanditam,

dhanuhparashupaanim cha saakshaatkaalamivaantakam. 7. 7

Kaartaveeryaantakam raamam driptakshatriyamardanam,

praaptam dasharathasyaagre` kaalamrityumivaaparam. 7. 8

Tam drishtvaa bhayasantrasto raajaa dasharastadaa,

arghyaadipoojaam vismritya traahi traahi chaabraveet. 7. 9

Dandavatpranipaatyaaha putrapraanam prapachchha me`,

Iti bruvantam raajaanamanaadritya raghuttamam. 7. 10

Uvaacha nishthuram vaakyam krodhatprachalite`ndriyah,

tvam raama iti naamnaa me` charasi kshatriyaadhama. 7. 11

Dvandvayuddham prayachchhaashu yadi tvam kshatriyoasi vai,

puraanam jarjaram chaapam bhanktvaa tvam katthase` mridhaa. 7. 12

Asminstu vaishnave` chaapa aaropayasi che`dgunam,

tadaa yuddham tvayaa saardham karomi raghuvanshaja. 7. 13

No che`tsarvaanhanishyaami kshatriyaantakaro hyaham,

iti bruvati vai tasminshchachaala vasudhaa bhrisham. 7. 14

Andhakaaro babhoovaatha sarve`shaamapi chakshushaam,

raamo daasharathirveeryo veekshya tam bhargavam rushaa. 7. 15

Dhanuraachchhidya taddhastaadaaropya gunamanjasaa,

tooneeradvaanamaadaaya sandhaayaakrishya veeryavaan. 7. 16

Uvaacha bhaargavam raamam shrunu brahmanvacho mama,

lakshyam darshaya baanasya hyamogho mama saayakah. 7. 17

Lokaanpaadayugam vaapi vada sheeghram mamaagnayaa,

ayam lokah paro vaatha tvayaa gantum na shakyate`. 7. 18

E`vam tvam hi prakartavyam vada sheeghram mamaagnayaa,

e`vam vadati shreeraame` bhaargavo vikritaananah. 7. 19

Sansmaranpoorvavrittaantamidam vachanamabraveet

raama raama mahaabaaho jaane` tvaam parame`shvaram. 7. 20

Puraanapurusham vishnum jagatsargolayodbhavam,

baalye`aham tapasaa vishnumaaraadhayitumanjasaa. 7. 21

Chakrateertham shubham gatvaa tapasaa vishnumanvaham,

atoshayam mahaatmaanam naaraayanamananyadheeh. 7. 22

Tatah prasanno de`ve`shah shankhachakragadaadharah,

uvaacha maam raghushre`shtha prasannamukhapankajah. 7. 23

Shreebhagavaanuvaacha

Uttishtha tapaso brahmanfalitam te` tapo mahat,

machchhidanshe`na yukttastvam jahi haihayapungavam. 7. 24

A number of ominous signs appeared as the barat proceeded towards Ayodhya. Raja Dashrath began to feel nervous. He asked Vasishthaji, "what is happening, Maharaj? These inauspicious signs indicate some danger."

Vasishthaji reassured Raja Dashrath. "Yes," he said, "these signs do indicate a cause of bhaya, but after it is over, you will become abhay. This is evident by the fact that the deer are running to our right, which indicates that something auspicious will come."'

You see the vichar of shakun-apashakun (auspicious-inauspicious signs) is given here because this is also a part of our ancient culture.

'The wind blew strongly, filling everybody's eyes with dust. A few minutes later a luminous figure stood before them. His whole form radiated with brightness. He was Parashuram, the son of Jamadagni. His head was crowned with a jata of blue-black hair. In his hands were a dhanush and a *farasaa* – an axe. He looked like Time – the cause of death.

The people present got a darshan of Parashuram, who had killed the thousand armed warrior Kartaveerya Sahasrabahu. He had also killed the Kshatriyas who had become intoxicated by their own power – *driptakshatriyamardanam.* This had been going on for quite some time.

There were some personal issues between Vasishtha and Vishwamitra. Vasishtha was a Brahmin and Vishwamitra was born a Kshatriya. Sometimes, the Brahmins would be suppressed and sometimes the Kshatriyas; a great tussle went on between them. The ruling of the Shastras regarding this is that the

upliftment of the Kshatriyas is not possible without the help of Brahmins, nor can the Brahmins flourish without the support of the Kshatriyas.

Naa brahma kshatriyamrighnoti naakshatram brahma vardhate`,

brahm kshatrancha samprikttamiha chaamutra vardhate`.

Neither the Kshatriya, nor the Brahmin can prosper unless there is a natural give and take, because what can power achieve without buddhi; and what can buddhi achieve unless it is backed by strength? Bala and buddhi must work in tandem for the manushya's jeevan to progress satisfactorily. Enmity between them is a source of great dukha.

It is because of this that Sahasrabahu had killed Parashuram's father, Jamadagni. Parashuram retaliated by killing all the Kshatriyas.

'Now, that same Parashuram came and stood before Dashrath. Dashrath kept saying, *"traahee, traahee"* – no puja, no welcome, no pranam; he was too petrified to think clearly – *arghyaadipoojaam vismaritya.* Dashrath forgot that he should welcome Parashuram by doing puja, bow down, etc. He just kept saying, "save us! Save us!" He fell at Parashuram's feet, begging for his sons' lives to be spared. "I am prepared for everyone else to be killed," he said.

Raajaanamanaadritya – Parashuramji took no notice of Dashrathji. He looked at Rama in a haze of anger, shouting, "Hey, you! Why have you taken my name? My name is Rama – why do you call yourself Rama also? You are a half-ling Kshatriya! Come and wrestle with me! You and I will fight in single combat. You are a Kshatriya and you have broken an old dhanush – do you consider yourself to be a great warrior? If there is any real strength in you, put the bow-string on this dhanush of Vishnu's, which I am holding, only then will I fight you. Otherwise, I will know that you are a mere straw like any other manushya."

Hearing this, Bhagwan Rama took the dhanush for Parashuram's hand in full view of all present.'

There is an old book called 'Hanuman Tratak', in which this episode is described beautifully, in great detail. Janakji was filled with despair when none of the Rajas were able to lift Shivaji's dhanush. The words burst out, 'there are no men of valor left in this world – *veera viheena mahee main jaanee'.* Lakshmanji

challenged this statement. 'Deva! Shri Raghunath! *Kim bahutayaa? Daasoasmi te` lakshmanah. Me`rvaadeenapi bhoodharaanna ganaye` jeernah pinaakah kiyam?'* Shri Rama told Lakshmanji, "Lakshman! I will do what you say. I don't count even mountains like the Meru to be anything, let alone this old dhanush?'

Parashuramji has been ridiculed in this episode in the 'Hanumannataka'. Goswamiji has used this in the Ramcharitamanasa, by putting Lakshmanji in-between Parashuram and Ramachandra.

'The day turned dark. Lakshmanji was at the rear end of the barat, and nobody was paying any attention to Dashrathji. Ramachandra ran forward and took the dhanush from Parashuramji's hand – *raamo dasharathirveero veekshya tam bhaargavam rushaa.* He looked angrily at Parashuram, and – *dhanuraachchhidya taddhastaadaaropya gunamanjasaa* – grabbed the dhanush from Parashuramji's hand. He strung it and placed an arrow on it.

Shri Ramachandra said to Parashuramji, "Parashuramji! My baan is unfailing; tell Me who I should target. Who should I shoot with My invincible baan? If you say so, I will turn your loka and paraloka to ashes. Or else, I will am it at your *paadayugam* – your two feet – which will render you incapable of going anywhere in either this loka or in the paraloka. I am willing to let you choose."

Parashuram's faced paled when he heard Ramachandra's words – *vikritaa nah* – it became distorted. Then, memory came flooding back to him. "Rama!" he exclaimed. "I recognize You now! You are the Purana Purusha, the sakshat Parameshwara. I had done Vishnu's aradhana when I was a child, while I was staying at the Chakratirtha in the Naimisharanya."'

There are twelve places of particular importance in Bharat, for doing Vishnu Bhagwan's aradhana. One of them is the forest called Naimish. The Puranas give considerable importance to the three principle Tirthas spoken of by Shri Ramanuja Acharya, of which Naimisharanya is one.

'Parashuramji said, "Bhagwan Vishnu was pleased with the aradhana I did in Naimisharanya. He appeared before me in His chaturbhuj form, holding His Shankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma. He told me that I have received the fruit of my tapasya, and gave me an ansha – a portion – of His pure consciousness. I received the *chid-ansha* of Bhagwan Narayana!"'

There are many kinds of Avatars. Parashuramji's is an ansha-Avatar. A kind of influence descended into him. He was already born; he was not an Avatar by birth. Bhagwan Vishnu entered into his shareer in a limited form, and remained until he met Ramachandra. When Parashuram met Rama, the ansha of the Paramatma went back into the Paramatma Shri Rama.

In this Avatar Bhagwan's pulsating shakti was activated by itself for a little while. There are Avatars, like the *aave`sha-avataara, kalaa-avataara, ansha-avataara, poorna-avataara,* and *paripoorna-avataara*. There is a book called the 'Laghu Bhagwatamrita' in which the details of these Avatars are given. It is written by Sanatan Goswamiji Maharaj. This book explains that the most superior Avatars are the Nriasimha, Rama and Krishna Avatars. Even in these three, Bhagwan's anand-ansha is not as prominent in the Nrisimha and Rama Avatars as in the Krishna Avatar. The book is not very large, but it is the result of extensive research of all the Puranas, about which Avatar took place where, in which Yuga, and what grade it was. This book was published with a Hindi translation by the Venkatesh Press, but it is no longer available.

Kaartaveeryam pitrihanam yadartham tapasah shramah,

Tatasvih saptakritvastvam hatvaa kshatriyamandalam. 7. 25

Kritsnaam bhoomim kashyapaaya dattvaa shaantimupaavaha,

traitaamukhe` daasharathirbhootvaa raamoahamavyayah. 7. 26

Utpatsye` parayaa shaktyaa tadaa drakshyasi maam tatah,

matte`jah punaraadaasye` tvayi dattam mayaa puraa. 7. 27

Tadaa tapashchyarailloke` tishtha tvam brahmano dinam,

ityuktvaantardadhe` de`vastathaa sarvam kritam mayaa. 7. 28

Sa e`va vishnustvam raama jaatoasi brahmanaarthitah,

mayi sthitam tu tvatte`jatvayaiva punaraahritam. 7. 29

Adya me` safalam janma prateetoasi mama prabho,

brahmaadibhiralabhyastvam prakrite` paarago matah. 7. 30

'Narayana told Parashuramji, "I place My chid-ansha in you. Go and kill Kartaveerya. He is the most valorous of the Haiheya clan. He killed your father. It is for him that you have done this severe tapasya. After killing Kartaveerya, kill all the Kshatriyas. No Kshatriya should be left alive on this prithivi. When this is done, do daan of the prithivi to Kashyap.

I will come as Dashrath's son Rama, in the Treta Yuga. You will get My darshan and I will withdraw My chid-ansha from you – *matte`jah punaraadaasye` tvayi dattam mayaa puraa.* When this is done you should continue to do tapasya. Your lifespan will be as long as one day in Brahmaji's life."

After saying this, Narayana became invisible. "Thus, Rama, I have realized now, that You are Vishnu. You have come as Rama in response to Brahmaji's prayer, and have taken back the power You had given me. The purpose of my birth is achieved. I have got Your darshan, which is difficult for even Brahmaji and other Devtas to get. You are above and beyond Prakriti!"

Parashuram started to do Shri Ramachandra's stuti as the Brahman.'

The Valmiki Ramayana gives greater prominence to the charitra of the people, particularly, Shri Rama's sadguna. Shri Rama's charitra and sadguna dominate the entire epic. Different books are written with different viewpoints. The Adhyatma Ramayana gives us a darshan of Shri Rama's Tattva as the Brahman. The fact that Shri Ramachandra is the sakshat Parabrahm Paramatma is emphasized repeatedly.

Tvayi janmaadishadbhaavaa na santyagnaanasambhavaah,

nirvikaaroasi poornastvam gamanaadivivarjitah. 7. 31

In the opinion of both Shri Ramanujacharya and Shri Madhavacharyra, this is a description of our own Atma; not of the Paramatma. The second chapter of the Gita also describes the Atma, not the Paramatma. All the Mahapurushas are united in their opinion that *naayam bhootvaa bhavitaa vaa na bhooyah* – the Atma is not born; nor does it die.

Shad-vikar means the six changes in the shareer – birth, existence, growth, change, decay and death. None of them are in the Atma. They are accepted as

facts because of agnan. There is no agnan in Rama, so how can any of them touch Him?

“You are nirvikar! You are poorna! In You, there is no coming and no going.

Yathaa jale` fe`najaalim dhoomo vanhau tathaa tvayi,

tvadaadhaaraa tvadvishayaa maayaa kaaryam srijatyaho. 7. 32

Yaavanmaayaavritaa lokaastaavattvaam na vijaanate`,

avichaaraitasiddhaishaavidyaa vidyaavirodhinee. 7. 33

Avidyaakrita de`haadisanghaate` pratibimbitaa,

chichchhakttirjeevaloke`asmin jeeva ityabhidheeyate`. 7. 34

Yaavadde`hamanah praanabuddhyaadishvabhimaanavaan,

taavatkartritvabhoktritvasukhadukhaadibhaagbhave`t. 7. 35

Aatmanah sansriteernaasti buddhe`rgnaanam na jaatviti,

avive`kaaddvayam yunktvaasansaareeti pravartate`. 7. 36.

This is wonderful! This is amazing! It is unbelievable that just as foam is seen as something separate from the water it is made of, and smoke is seen as something separate from the fire it rises from, Maya is seen as being separate from You – *tvadaadhaaraa tvadvishayaa* – who does Maya delude? It deludes the Paramatma!”’

There are many separate groups among the Vedantis – *aatmaashrayaa brahmavishayaa* – one opinion is that Maya stays in the Jeevatma, and covers up the Brahman. One opinion is that Maya stays in the Atma and covers up the Atma. The ‘Vivaran Prasthan’ and the ‘Bhamati Prasthan’ believe this to be the difference.

Tvadaadhaaraa tvadvishayaa maayaa kaaryam srijatyaho – as long as the manushya is trapped in Maya’s magic show, he does not recognize the Paramatma. He watches Maya’s play, but does not see the magician who controls Maya. He sees the good and bad things thatare shown in the play of Maya’s magic.

Is this avidya?

Avichaaritasiddhaishaa avidya vidyaavirodhinee – avidya is established by a-vichar; by the lack of right thinking. That means, agnan remains until you investigate its reality. So does deluded thinking.

As soon as you begin to investigate the truth of the matter, agnan is destroyed. *Vidyaa-virodhinee* – the two words *vidyaa* – meaning right knowledge, and *virodhinee* – meaning that, which is hostile, are two separate words.

Asyaa avidyaayaa vidyaa virodhinee bhavati – vidya destroys avidya. The meaning is not that avidya is the enemy of vidya! The meaning is that, which is hostile to avidya, is vidya.

It is because of avidya that the antahkarana in the shareer, in which the chit-shakti of the Atma is reflected, is called a 'jeeva'. As long as a person continues to feel the abhiman of being an individual, with the subtle pride of 'I' and 'mine', the mana-prana-buddhi have the abhiman of being a separate person, with feelings of being a punyatma-paapi, karta-bhokta, sukhi-dukhi etc.

In fact, none of these are real; there is no sansara for the Atma. The Atma is not subject to birth, death, decay, or rebirth. There is no sansara in the Atma and no Gnan in the buddhi. There is no jadata. It is avivek that makes people fail to discriminate between the Atma and the buddhi, and makes a manushya believe he is a sansari living in an interactive world.

Jadasya chitsamaayogaachchhittvam bhooyaachchite`stathaa,

jadasangaajjadatvam hi jalaagnyorme`lanam yathaa. 7. 37

The chitta is jada. It mingles with the chetan and believes itself to be chetan. And, the chetan mingles with the jada and starts to believe itself to be jada! That is why this whole world is a play of *naa-samajhee* – not having the proper understanding about the Satya. 'This', 'ours-theirs', 'sukha-dukha', 'karma-paapa-punya-fruit' etc are all the extensions of nasamajhi.

However, nobody can become free of this nasamajhi until they get the association of bhaktas.

Yaavattvatpaadabhakttaanaam sangasaukhyam na vindati,

taavatsansaaradukhaudhaanna nivarte`nnarah sadaa. 7. 38

Unless you get the sukha of associating with bhaktas of Bhagwan's charanaravinda, of those who are devoted to His lotus-feet, no manushya can become free of this nasamajhi. A manushya feels sukhi and also dukhi many times every day.

Until when does this continue?
It continues until a manushya gets the Satsang of Bhagwan's bhaktas.

Tatsangalaabdhayaa bhaktyaa yadaa tvaam samupaasate`,

tadaa maayaa shanairyaati taanavam pratipadyate`. 7. 39

Tatastvangnaanasampannah sadguruste`na labhyate`,

vaakyagnaanam gurorlabdhvaa tvatprasaadaadidvimuchyate`. 7. 40

Tasmaattvadbhakttiheenaanaam kalpakotishatairapi,

na mukttishankaa vignaanashankaa naiva sukham tathaa. 7. 41

Atastvatpaadayugale` bhakttirme` janmajanmani,

syaattvadbhakttimataam sangoavidyaa yaabhyaam vinashyati. 7. 42

When a manushya gets Satsang with Bhagwan's bhaktas and starts to do Bhagwan's upasana with bhakti, Maya gradually withdraws from his jeevan. She becomes absolutely ineffective – *taanavam pratipadyate`*. After that the manushya gets an enlightened Guru. As long as he remains engrossed in the Maya-mamata and moha, mine-yours, etc, he does not get a Gnani Sadguru. Maya has to release a manushya from her clutches before his feelings of 'me-mine' are weakened, his partialities and prejudices for 'friend-foe' are weakened, and his preoccupations with worldly matters are reduced. After that he gets a Sadguru who is a realized Master – *vaakyagnaanam gurolabdhvaa tvatprasaadaadvimuchyate`* - when he gets a Sadguru the Guru's upadesh penetrates into his hriday, and he gets Gnan. Only after that, by Your kripa, does he become Mukta.

Nobody can get the vignan of Mukti without this. And, if there is no Mukti, how can there be sukha?

Loke` tvadbhakttiniraataastvaddharmaamritavarshinah,

punanti lokamakhilam kim punah svakulodbhavaan. 7. 43

Therefore, I want to have bhakti for Your charan-kamal in my future births, and I also want the Satsang of Your bhaktas."'

Two things are needed for avidya to be destroyed. One is to keep the company of bhaktas – *loke` tvadbhakttiniratamstvaddharmaamritavarshinah* – when a person has prema for Bhagwan in his hriday, has bhakti for Bhagwan, and keep showering the amrita of Bhagavat-Dharma, what is there to be surprised at, if you are told that he makes all three worlds pavitra?

Namoastu jagataam naatha namaste` bhakttibhaavana,

namah kaarunikaananta raamachandra namostu te`. 7. 44

De`va yadyatkritam punyam mayaa lokajigeeshayaa,

tatsarvam tava baanaaya bhooyaadraama namoastu te`. 7. 45

Tatah prasanno bhagavaan shreeraamah karunaamayah,

prasannoasmi tava brahmanyatte` manasi varhate`. 7. 46

Daasye` tadakhilam kaamam maa kurushvaanna sanshayam,

tatah preete`na manasaa bhaargavo raamamabraveet. 7. 47

Yadi me`anugraha raama tavaasti madhusoodana,

tvadbhakttasangastvatpaade` dridhaa bhakttih sadaastu me`. 7. 48

Stotrame`tatpathe`dyastu bhakttiheenopi sarvadaa,

tvadbhakttistasya vignanam bhooyaadante` smritistava. 7. 49

Tathe`ti raaghave`nokttah parikramya pranamya tam,

poojitastadanugnaato mahe`ndraachalamanvagaat. 7. 50

Raajaa daasharatho hrishto raamam mritamivaagatam

aalingyaalingya harshe`na ne`traabhyaam jalamutsrijat. 7. 51

Tatah preete`na manasaa svasthachittah puram yayau,

raamalakshmanashatrughnabharataa de`vasammilaah,

svaam svaam bhaaryaamupaadaaya re`mire` svasvamandire`. 7. 52

Maataapitribhyaam samhrishto raamah seetaasamanvitah,

re`me` vaikunthabhavane` shriyaa saha yathaa harih. 7. 53

Yudhajinnaama kaike`yeebhraataa bharatamaatulah,

bharatam ne`tumaagachchhatsvaraajyam preetisanyutah. 7. 54

Pre`shayaamaasa bharatam raajaa sne`hasamanvitah,

shatrughnam chaapi sampoojya yudhaajitamarindamah. 7. 55

Prabhu! I bow down at Your charan-kamal. You told me that Your baan is amogha – it is unfailing. You want me to tell You where to aim it – whether this loka or my paraloka should be destroyed, or whether the gati of my feet should be destroyed.

Maharaj! I pray to You that all my punya should be dedicated to You, and be destroyed by Your aiming Your baan at my punya."'

There is no paapa in Parashuram. When paapa and punya are both destroyed a manushya becomes Mukta.

'Bhagwan Shri Rama was very pleased with Parashuram's decision. He said, "Parashuramji, I am very pleased with you. Ask for a vara. I am ready to grant any wish of yours; don't have any doubts."

"Rama!" said Parashuramji, "if You wish to do anugraha on me, then – O Madhusudana! – grant me two boons. One, that I should always get the association of Your bhaktas. The other, I will always have unshakeable bhakti for Your charan-kamal. *Tvadbhakttasangastvatapaade` dridhaa bhakttih sadaastu me`*. Also, please grant this, that anybody who does the paatha of this stotra – even if they don't have bhakti – Your bhakti-vignan will come into his hriday, and he will ultimately regain Your smriti."

Ramachandra said, “Tathastu – so be it.” Parashuramji did His parikrama and bowed down to Him. He was honored by Shri Ramachandra, and then he went away to the Mahendra Parvat.

Raja Dashrath became immersed in param anand. Parashuramji had been a sworn enemy of the Kshatriyas. Now, he had given up his supernatural power and placed it in Ramachandra. He had done Ramachandra’s stuti with the feeling of doing Bhagwan’s stuti, bowed down to Him after doing His parikrama, and gone away. To Raja Dashrath it seemed as though Rama had returned from the jaws of death. He embraced Rama repeatedly – *aalingyaalingya harshe`na ne`traabhyaam jalamusrijata* – with tears running down his cheeks.

Dashrathji entered his city in a very happy frame of mind. His four sons, who were like Devtas, began to live with their patnis in their personal palaces. They did seva of their father and mothers. Rama and Sita lived like Narayana and Laxmi living in Vaikuntha.

At that time, Kaikeyi’s brother, Yudhajit, came to Ayodhya. He wanted to take his nephew Bharat with him when he returned to his own city, for a visit. Raja Dashrath gave his consent willingly. He honored Yudhajit and sent Bharat and Shatrughna with him.’

In the Valmiki Ramayana it is written that Bharatji insisted on Shatrughna accompanying him. Now, what is the difference in the two versions? The difference is that Yudhajit had come with the intention of taking his nephew, who he was very fond of, back with him, but Bharatji wanted Shatrughna to go also.

What is the point in this?

The point is that Shatrughna is like an instrument in Bharatji’s hands. He is the *daasaanudaasa* – a servant’s servant. He did whatever Bharat wanted. Bharatji is Ramachandra’s dasa and Shatrughna is Bharat’s dasa. It is said that Shatrughna never said anything in Ramachandra’s presence. Bharat did whatever Ramachandra wanted, and Shatrughna did whatever Bharat wanted. The Dharma of a dasanudasa is a double dasa – this is a very strange leela! The dasa of a dasa has no independent activity. Shatrughna was content with whatever Bharat did.

Bharat won the battle with the Gandharvas. Lakshman supported Ramji. Then, the matter of killing Lavanasura came up. Shatrughna said, 'I have never had an opportunity to go to war. If You permit, I will go and kill this Asura.'

Ramji said, 'very well. Come, I will anoint you the Raja of Mathura.' This was even before Lavanasura was killed! Ramji crowned Shatrughna as the Raja of Mathura. He knew that Shatrughna would kill Lavanasura. At that very moment, Shatrughna placed a permanent curb on his tongue. He thought, 'for the first time in my life I made a suggestion, and the result is that I will have to live away from Shri Ramachandra! I did a great aparadh by expressing my sankalpa to kill Lavanasura.'

Kausalyaa shushubhe` de`vee raame`na saha seetayaa,

de`vamaate`va paulomyaa shachyaa shakre`na shobhanaa. 7. 56

Saake`te` lokanaathaprathitaganagano lokasankeetakeertih shreeraamah seetayaaste`akhilajananikaraanandasandahamoortih,

nityashreernirvikaaro niravadhivibhavo nityamaayaaniraaso maayaakaaryaanusaaree manuja iva sadaa bhaati de`voakhile`shah. 7. 57

'Kausalya's beauty was enhanced, as she lived with her son Rama, and daughter-in-law Sita. She looked like Aditi, the mother of the Devtas, and like Indra's wife, Paulomi Shachi.'

Ayodhya is Saket personified. If a person gets a glimpse of something divine, he will know it through his mana. What is the use of a divinity that is not experienced by the mana? Since it is the mana that experiences divyata, let our mana experience everything as being divya, staring from this very moment!

For this, there are two methods. This is a secret of sadhana. Let go of everything that does not seem to be the Ishwara to you. Give it no thought or consideration. Then, you alone will remain. Now, if you make an effort to feel that even you do not remain, how can anything be experienced if there is nobody to experience anything? Then, you will find the Ishwara quickly! Or else, you will understand that everything you experience is a swarup of the Parameshwara. This is the second method in sadhana.

And, all the things in-between these two are a muddled tangle of useless things. Use either the method of *ne`ti-ne`ti* – discarding everything that is not the Atma, until only you, the Atma, remain.

Or else, you – the Atma – and the Paramatma are one. See that the Paramatma is the only reality, and see divyata everywhere.

It is not possible for us to have such a lofty vision, or to stay on a lowly level. This is an extremely high sadhana. So, then – look! This is Saket! It is evident for you to see. There are musicians who sing of Bhagwan Shri Rama-Sita's glory. Their job is to give anand to all.

Will the Surya refuse to give light to thieves and wrong-doers, saying it will give light to only those who chant the Vedas? Will Gangaji ever stipulate that only punyatmas can bathe in her waters; no paapi can. Will the dharati permit only punyatmas to tread on her, forbidding all paapis to step on the ground? No Tattva differentiates in giving its element freely to one and all. Neither does the Ishwara-Tattva differentiate. Bhagwan Shri Rama is the treasury of the anand if this creation. The very sight of Rama filled Janak with anand.

Inaheen vilokata ati anuraagaa, barabasa brahma sukhahin mana tyaagaa – Janakji's mana gave up the sukha of being established in the Brahman when he saw Rama and felt an upsurge of prema. The Sanakadi Rishis feel the supreme anand when they see Him. That means, the nivritti parayana Sanakadis and the pravritti parayana Raja Janak, and even the ladies of Janakpur were filled with prema at the sight of Ramachandra. Even the Rakshasi Surpanakha became enthralled, filled with prema for Shri Rama, and so did Marich and Subahu. Poisonous creatures like snakes and scorpions let go of their venom when they saw Him.

Shri Ramachandra gives anand. All the creatures of the land, water, and air are filled with anand when they see Him. Shri Rama does not make any selection about who to give anand to and who not, or who to give prema to. He showers anand and prema the way the Surya lights up the whole world.

'Nityashreenirvikaaro niravadhivibhaavo' – the word *nityashree* is used freely in the Vaishnava Sampradayas. 'Nityashree' means that Bhagwan's Shree is eternal – His splendor and glory never wane. *Nitya shreeryasya asau nityashree.*

Who is Bhagwan?

Bhagwan is nityashree, He is nirvikar, and His actions are in no way connected to kama, krodha, or lobha. His splendor remains unchanged. Maya cannot influence Him, and He is perceived as portrayed by Maya. He is the infinite, eternal Ishwara who seems to be a manushya, but is Bhagwan Shri Narayana.

'This Bhagwan started to live in anand, with Sitaji, in Ayodhya.'

Ayodhya Kanda

The first Sarga.

The meeting of Shri Rama and Narad.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

E`kadaa sukhamaaseenam raamam svaantahpuraajire`,

sarvaabharasampannam ratnasinhasane` sthitam. 1. 1

Neelotpaladalashyaamam kaustubhaamukttakandharam,

seetayaa ratnadandade`na chaamare`naatha veejitam. 1. 2

Vinodayantam taamboolacharvanaadibhiraadaraat,

naaradoavataraddrishtumambaraadyatra raaghavah. 1. 3

Shuddhasfatikasankaashah sharachchandra ivaamalah,

atarkitamupaayaato naarado divyadarshanah. 1. 4

Tam drishtvaa sahasotthaaya raamah preetyaa kritaanjali,

nanaama shirasaa bhoomau seetayaa saha bhakttimaan. 1. 5

Uvaacha naaradam raamah preetyaa paramayaa yutah,

samsaarinaam munishre`shtha durlabham tava darshanam,

asmaakam vishayaasakttache`tasaam nitaraam mune`. 1. 6

People may say that it is not easy to do Bhagwan's dhyana.

Bhagwan is everywhere, like the akash. Make Him wear ornaments in your imagination. Then they become evident to your mind's eye. Ramachandra is seated on a throne. A crown rests on His head, the Kaustubh Mani is at His throat, armbands glint on His arms, bracelets at His wrists, and a gold girdle encircles His waist. Anklets tinkle at His feet. Just picture all these ornaments, and a form will appear in between them – a form that is all-pervading pure consciousness, the color of the akash.

If somebody insists that he should see Shri Rama first and then the ornaments, that won't happen! You have to imagine Rama's ornaments before you can picture His form.

The jeevas who are His devoted bhaktas become His ornaments. Some become bangles, but since the jeeva has no hands, Bhagwan gives His hands for the bangles to encircle. The anklets have no feet. Bhagwan says, 'the nupur are great bhaktas of Mine,' and puts His feet into the anklets. Thus, do dhyana of the ornaments that adorn Bhagwan's form, and you will be able to do dhyana of Bhagwan Shri Rama.

The bhaktas in the form of Ramachandra's ornaments are those who have attained *saameepya mukti* – there is no rebirth for them; they always stay close to Bhagwan. They are liberated jeevas who prayed to stay close to Him always. Bhagwan's ornaments are chetan; they cling to His form.

Bhagwan's throne is studded with precious gems. It forms itself. It is not created by skilful artisans, nor is it carried by four hefty men! It is Bhagwan's bhaktas who have become His simhasan! They are ready whenever He wants to sit. Bhagwan Shri Rama says, 'Oh, My bhaktas have become My simhasan, for Me to sit on, so let Me sit down.'

Bhagwan's form is the hue of a freshly bloomed blue lotus. The Kaustubh Mani never budges from its position close to the hollow of His throat. One meaning of '*kaustubh'* is - *kaustubhe`na amuktto kandharo yasya tam* – He, whose throat is never without the Kaustubh Mani.

How can the Kaustubh Mani leave Bhagwan? It is the essence of all the jeevas in creation. It is gem that is chetan; it clings to the hollow at Bhagwan's throat. It is not pierced with any hole or crack. How can anything that is attached to Bhagwan be defective in any way? How can it be bound in any way? It is paripoorna with the raag of anurag! Anurag means prema.

The Kaustubh Mani is Laxmiji's brother. Both are nitya. At the time of the samudra-manthan, when the ocean was being churned to bring out the amrita, Laxmiji had a thought. 'I have never had a proper marriage ceremony with Him because we are the eternal couple.'

Bhagwan told Laxmiji, 'go down to the depths of the samudra and kiss the base of the Mandarachal Parvat. Wander around for a while and then come out. Make the samudra your father – he will become My father-in-law. Make the Kaustubh Mani your brother – he will become My brother-in-law.'

They are all nitya.

'Sitaji is using the *chanvara* – the fly whisk – that has precious stones studded in its handle, so that flies don't disturb Ramachandra. At times she offers Him a *taambula*, a betel-nut leaf wrapped round some condiments, or some roasted betel-nut, thinly sliced, or some cardamom seeds to chew, as a mouth freshener.

One day, when Shri Rama-Sita were sitting together Naradji descended from the akash. *Naaradoavatarad drashtumambaraadyatraraaghavah* - he suddenly appeared close to the throne on which Shri Rama-Sita sat. Naradji's form was like pure crystal. It seemed as though the full moon on the night of the lunar month of Sharad, when it is brightest, had descended from the heavens. It was a divya darshan. Shri Rama stood up with folded hands, and welcome Naradji with great prema.'

You can understand that had it not been for the Mahatmas, nobody would bother about Bhagwan! So, Bhagwan always shows great respect to Mahatmas. It is written in the Bhagwat:

Soaham bhavadbhya upalabdhasuteerthakeertishchhandyaam
svabaahumapi vah pratikoolavrittim. 3. 16. 6

Bhagwan said, 'the kirti I have is because of you, Maharaj! If even this hand of Mine were to do anything against you, I would cut it off and

throw it away, because My kirti – which has the power to give Moksha to whoever does its shravan – was not with Me earlier; it is given by you, the Mahatmas.'

'Bhagwan Shri Ramachandra stood up as soon as He saw Naradji. He folded His hands and bowed down with His head at Naradji's feet.'

Most of you probably know what pranam means. To fold hands means, 'I will do what you command.' To bow the head means, 'my buddhi will be guided by yours.' Sashtang pranam – or dandavat pranam – is to prostrate full length. It means, 'I dedicate my jeevan to you.' Just as a person uses a *danda* – a staff – to give support when walking, or to hit someone with, the person who does dandavat pranam offers himself to be used as the revered person wishes.

'Rama spoke to Naradji with great prema. "O most superior among Munis! Your darshan is extremely difficult for a sansari like Me to get, a person who has asakti for vishays, lives in a palace with His patni, enjoying a life of pleasure and comfort. And, that, too, I get your darshan at My home! No doubt this is the fruit of some great punya I have done in a previous birth. The darshan and association of a Sant is indeed rare and difficult to get. A manushya gets it only if he has done a lot of punya in his past life!"'

Avaaptam me` poorvajanmakritapunyamahodayaih,

sansaarinaapi hi mune` labhyate` satsamaagamah. 1. 7

Atastaddarshanaade`va kritaarthoasmi muneeshvara,

kim kaarayam te` mayaa kaarayam broohi tatkaravaani bhoh. 1. 8

Atha tam naaradoapyaaha raaghavam bhaktavatsalam,

kim mohayasi maam raama vaakyairlokaanusaaribhih. 1. 9

Sansaaryahamiti proktam satyame`tattvayaa vibho,

jagataamaadibhootaa yaa saa maayaa grihinee tava. 1. 10

Tvatsannikarshaajjaayante` tasyaam brahmaadayah prajaah,

tvadaashrayaa sadaa bhaati maayaa yaa trigunaatmikaa. 1. 11

Soote`ajasram shuklakrishnalohitaah sarvadaa prajaah,

lokatryamahaage`he` grihasthastvamudaahritah. 1. 12

Tvam vishnurjaanakee lakshmeeh shivastvam jaanakee shivaa,

brahmaa tvam jaanakee vaanee sooryastvam jaanakee prabhaa. 1. 13

Bhavaan shashaankah seetaa tu rohinee shubhalakshanaa,

shukrastvame`va paulomee seetaa svaahaanalo bhavaan. 1. 14

Yamastvam kaalaroopashcha seetaa samyaminee prabho,

Nirritistvam jaganaatha taamasee jaanakee shubhaa. 1. 15

Keep one thing in mind about Satsang – a Satsang that arouses dvesha is not Satsang. If any association gives rise to dvesha, disgust, revolt, moha or increased raga etc, it cannot be called Satsang. Satsang is when these doshas are reduced and removed, and methods are shown about how a manushya's mana can become free of these doshas.

Somebody may say, 'that man is a scoundrel.' A Mahatma's response will be, 'focus on improving your own mana. Let that man do what he wants. You have not been given the task of removing his doshas; your task is to make your mana pavitra.'

'"The purpose of Satsang is that a person who listens to a Mahatma becomes pavitra," said Ramachandra. "Nobody who hasn't done a lot of punya in his past jeevan can meet a Mahatma. I am fulfilled by getting your darshan, Naradji. Please command Me – how can I serve you?"

Naradji knows the vatsalya Bhagwan has for His bhaktas. He said, "Rama! Why are You deluding me by talking like an ordinary

manushya? You say that You are a sansari; that You have got my darshan because of punya You did in the past!

What You say is totally appropriate in a way; the Maha-Maya who is the mother of this whole sansara is Your patni, and therefore, You have become a sansari! Who else can be a sansari like You? It is because of Your proximity that Brahma and Your other sons are born. Maya glimmers with her three gunas with Your ashray, and creates the Sattvaguni, Rajoguni, and Tamoguni beings. All the *bakaree* (female goats) are born! The Vedas have called them 'bakari'."'

Ajaame`kaam lohitashuklakrishnaam bahveeh prajaah srijaanaanaam namaamah.

There is a kind of speckled goat that has black, red and white patches. Black signifies Tamoguna, red signifies Rajoguna, and white signifies Sattvaguna. Maya is an *ajaa* – which means a female goat; and a goat, a *bakaraa*, is called aja – which means the unborn Paramatma, is attached to Maya.

'"The ajaa created this srishti with a relationship with You. The three lokas are Your huge mansion, and therefore, You are a sansari."

Naradji paused for a moment. Then, he continued. "You are Brahma and Janaki is Vani (Saraswati). You are the Surya and Janaki is light. You are Chandrama and Janaki is Rohini. You are Indra and Janaki is Paulomi – Shachi. You are Agni and Janaki is Svaha. You are the form of Yama and Janaki is Tamasi – related to darkness."'

That means, everything in this creation that is Sattvaguni, Rajoguni, or Tamoguni, is the swarup of Sita-Rama. Don't let anything have a negative effect on you. See what Bhagwan's leela is doing.

Yachcha kinchit kvachid vastu sadasad vaaakhilaatmike`,

tasya sarvasya yaa shakttih saa tvam kim stooyase` mayaa.

Where is that drishti of Hanumanji –

Jaake` bala lavale`sa te`n jite`hu charaachara jhaari,

taaso doota mein jaakari hari aane`hu priya naari.

(Ramcharitmanas, Sunder Kanda, doha 21)

Hanumanji sees Bhagwan in all. He told Ravana, 'I am the *doota* (emissary) of the one who has given you your strength.'

As long as you see anybody as an a-bhakta, or a-Bhagwan, your drishti is incomplete. A bhakta sees everybody as Bhagwan's bhakta, or as Bhagwan Himself! In the drishti of a bhakta, nobody is an abhakta, because a bhakta's hriday is filled with Bhagwan's bhakti.

Raama tvame`va varuno bhaargavee jaanakee shubhaa,

vaayustvam raama seeetaa tu sadaagatiriteeritaa. 1. 16

Kube`rastvam raama seetaa sarvasampatprakeertitaa,

rudraanee jaanakee proktaa rudrastvam lokanaashakrit. 1. 17

'Naradji told Shri Ramachandra, "Rama! You are Varun and Janaki is Bhargavi. You are Vayu and Janaki is gati. You are Kuber and Sita is wealth. You are Rudra and Janaki is Rudrani."

Thus, Narad explained the swarup of Sita-Rama.'

Loke` streevaachakam yaavattatsarvam jaanakee shubhaa,

putraamavachakam yaavattatsarvam tvam hi raaghava. 1. 18

Tasmaallokatraye` de`va yuvaabhyaam naasti kinchana. 1. 19

Tvadaabhaasoditaagnaanamaavyaakritamiteeryate`,

tasmaanmahaanstatah sootram lingam sarvaatmakam tatah. 1. 20

Ahankaaraashcha buddhishcha panchapraane`ndriyaani cha,

lingamityuchyate` praagnairjanmamrityusukhaadimat. 1. 21

Sa e`va jeevasangnashcha loke` bhaati jaganmayah,

avaachyaanaadyavidyaiva kaaranopaadhiruchyate`. 1. 22

Sthoolam sookshmam kaaranaakhyamupaadhikritayam chite`h,
e`tairvishishto jeevah syaadviyuktah parame`shvarah. 1. 23
Jaagritsvapnasushuptyaa samsritiryaa pravartate`,
tasyaa vilakshanah saakshee chinmaatrastvam raghuttama. 1. 24
Tvatta e`va jagajjaatam tvayi sarvam pratishthitam,
tvayye`va leeyate` kritsnam tasmaattvam sarvakaaranam. 1. 25
Rajjaavahimivaatmaanam jeevam gnaatvaa bhayam bhave`t,
paraatmaahamiti gnaatvaa bhayadukhairvimuchyate`. 1. 26
Chinmaatrajyotishaa sarvaah sarvade`he`shu buddhayah,
tvayaa yasmaatprashyante` sarvasyaatmaa tato bhavaan. 1. 27
Agnaanaannyasyate` sarvam tvayi rajjau bhujangavat,
tvajgnaanaalleeyate` sarvam tasmaajgnaanam sadaabhyase`t. 1. 28
Tvatpaadabhakttiyukttaanaam vignaanam bhavati kramaat,
tasmaattvadbhakttiyukttaa ye` mukttibhaajasta e`va hi. 1. 29
Aham tvadbhakttaanaam tadbhabhaktaanaam cha kinkarah,
ato maamanugrihneeshva mohayasva na maam prabho. 1. 30
Tvannaabhikamalotpanno brahmaa me` janakah prabho,
atastvaaham pautroasmi bhakttam maam paahi raaghava. 1. 31
Ityuktvaa bahusho natvaa svaanandaashrupariplutah,
uvaacha vachanam raama brahmanaa noditosmyaham. 1. 32
Raavanasya vadhaarthaaya jaatoasi raghusattama,
idaaneem raajyarakshaartham pitaa tvaamabhishe`kshyati. 1. 33
Yadi raajyaabhisamsamsaktto raavanam na hanishyasi,
pratignaa te` kritaa raama bhoobhaaraharanaaya vai. 1. 34

Tatsatyam kuru raaje`ndra satyasamghastvame`va hi,

shrutvaitadgaditam raamo naaradam praaha sasmitam. 1. 35

Shrunu naarada me` kinchidvidyate`aviditam kvachit,

pratignaatam cha yatpoorvam karishye` tatra sanshayah. 1. 36

Kintu kaalaanurodhe`na tattatpraarabdhasankshayaat,

harishye` sarvabhoobhaaram krame`naasuramandalam. 1. 37.

Ravanasya vinaashaartham shvo gantaa dandakaananam,

chaturdasha samaastatra hyushitvaa munive`shadhrik. 1. 38

Seetaamishe`na tam dushtam sakulam naashayaamyaham,

e`vam raame` pratignaaste` naaradah pramumoda ha. 3. 39

Pradakshinatrayam kritvaa dadavatpranipatya tam,

anugnaatashcha raame`na yayau de`vagatim munih. 1. 40

Samvaadam pathati shrinoti samsmare`dvaa yo nityam munivararaamayoh sa bhaktyaa,

sampraapnotyamarasudurlabham vimoksham kaivalyam viratipurahsaram krame`na. 1. 41

The purpose of the 'Adhyatma Ramayana' is not to describe the charitra of its persona; its actual purpose is to give the upadesh of adhyatma. The characters are mentioned briefly; at times only the names are given. Therefore, all feminine words are shubha Janaki and masculine words are Shri Rama.

The Vedas say:

Tvam stree tvam pumaanasi tvam kumara uta vaa kumaaree, jaato bhavasi vishvato mukhah.

You are the stree, You are the purush, You are the youth and You are the maiden. It is You who manifest in all forms.

Jeerno dande`na vanchasi – it is You who walks like an old man with a stick, cheating people by pretending to be old. It is absolutely You!

Thus, there is nobody in this world except Sita-Rama.

'The agnan that has arisen by Your false appearance in said to be *avyaakrita* – it cannot be defined. It is because of this aabhasa of Yours that first the Mahat-Tattva, then the subtle substance called the *lingaatmaka sootra*, then Hiranyagarbha, then ahankara, buddhi, the pancha tanmatra etc all manifest; and You allow Yourself to be called a jeeva, and wander on this prithivi. There is not any jeeva – neither stree nor purush – it is Rama!

It is Rama who is called a jeeva, and moves around in this world.

Matavaadin son araja yahee hai,

apane`-apane` ishta de`vako vyaapaka maanata haun ki naahin,

jau tuma vyaapaka naahina maanata jeeva dasa tahan aayi rahee.

(The question is, do you believe your Ishtadev to be vyapak or not? If you don't believe He is all-pervading, then He is only a jeeva!)

This was written by a famous Sant of Kashi called Kashtajihva Swami. His opinion was that the Ishtadev is all-pervading. He is in all beings. It is He who is seen in the forms of this jagat.

If that is the case, why is this jagat perceived?

Avidya is anadi – it has no beginning. It is anirvachanya – it cannot be defined as real or false. It is the cause of the jagat being superimposed on the substratum, the Brahman. When we look through this avidya the world seems to be different. If we let go of avidya and look at the prapanch – meaning, the world made of the pancha bhoota – nothing else exists, but the Brahman!

The three upadhis of the chetan are the sthoola, sookshma and karana shareers, and that which is separate from them is called a jeeva. Let go of the upadhis and see the Tattva. It is like a dancer coming on the

stage dressed up as a woman or an animal. You know that the dancer is a man.

Yathaa ane`kana roopa dhari nritya karai nata koya,

soyi soyi bhaava de`khaavana aapu hoyi na soya.

A dancer depicts a variety of forms, but is not actually any of them.

Separate the actual from the upadhi and see.

Put everything that is perceived by the indriyas into the suspense account and see – it is the Parameshwara! The sansara of the three states of jagrit, svapna and sushupti goes on, but its sakshi is separate from the three states of the jeeva. The sakshi is *chinmaatra* – the Atma is pure consciousness. When you say *vilakshana* – separate or different – you realize that the jagat is something else and the Parameshwara is something else. It is stated that the Parameshwara is the karana; the purpose of this statement is to dispel the feeling that they are separate.

The statement, 'This jagat is created by You,' raises a doubt, that Bhagwan created this world the way a potter creates a pot. This is what the Muslims, Christians and others believe.

The fact is, yes, the world has been created by You. Furthermore, it also exists in You. It is not that the pot was taken to the market and the potter stayed at home; it is not that this jagat was sent off to some other bazaar; this jagat is within You!

And, what happens when the pot is broken? Clay remains clay and mingles into the clay of the earth. That means, the chetan Parameshwara is the matter of which the world is made, as well as its maker. These three points must be kept in mind always.

Then?

The Parameshwara supports everything in the form of the akash. He is the one who creates everything, and He is also the matter of which

everything is created. Eventually, everything merges into Him. Therefore, all the causes of this jagat are the swarup of the Paramatma.

A person feels scared when he mistakes a coiled rope for a snake. In the same way, when a person believes himself to be a jeeva – and looks at the upadhi instead of looking at the Paramatma – he feels afraid. When he gets the Gnan that the Paramatma is not separate from his Atma, he no longer feels afraid.

The Atma and the Paramatma are of the same group. As soon as a manushya realizes this all dukha and fear are removed, and only the light of pure consciousness remains. There is only one akhand chinmatra, like the akash. When people perceive separate shareers with separate buddhis it is due to their own agnan.

It is You who projects them as separate. The fact is that it is You, the Atma, in the form of the Atma of all. Separate the crackle of the separate 'I', 'I', 'I' as the Atma in all, but the meaning of all the 'I's is that the Paramatma is one.

De`heede`havibhaagoayam avive`kakritah puraa.* The departments of the *de`ha, meaning the shareer, and the *de`hee*, meaning the owner of the shareer, are limited to the state of avivek. When a manushya gets vivek he uses discrimination, and understands that they are separate. He realizes that only the Paramatma exists; there are no division of jada and chetan.

If a person does not understand that what he sees is a rope, he mistakes it for a snake. When he does not understand You, he thinks You are a part of the jagat. As soon as he finds out that what be believed to be a snake is actually a coiled rope, the snake disappears – *tasmaajgnaanam sadaabhyase`t* – therefore, you should hold on to the Gnan.

How is Gnan obtained?

Tvadpaadabhakttiyukttaanaam vignaanam bavati kramaat – a bhakta of Bhagwan's charanamrita gains this Gnan gradually. Thus, a person who is attached to a bhakta of Bhagwan is worthy of Mukti, and he also understands this gradually. It is not that Mukti comes from somewhere, but is not available now. The meaning of the example of the coiled rope and snake is that there never was a snake that disappeared as soon as the rope was seen. That, which is obtained by Gnan, is already there.

'Naradji said, "I am the *kinkara* – servant – of those who are Your servants."'

A kinkar is a servitor who is ready to do the lowliest kind of work for his master – '*kim kutsitamapi karoti* – what seva can I do?' Kinkar does not mean a servant who asks, 'what should I do?' A person who is eager to do any kind of service, be it the lowliest, is called a kinkar. This point is given great importance in the Vaishnava Sampradaya.

There is one shloka written by Acharyaji. The purport of this shloka is: there was a Vaishnava. The bhakta of his bhakta's bhakta's bhakta – the eighteenth in serial order – was a dhobi who piled the dirty clothes on to his donkey and took them to the river for washing. 'May I become a worm in the urine of the donkey of that dhobi. He Bhagwan! Do this kripa on me!' prayed the Vaishnava.

This seems comical to us, but just think of the feeling behind the bhakta who wants to be connect even so remotely.

'Ahamtvadbhakttaanaam tadbhakttaanaam – the bhakta of Your bhakta's bhakta.' Here the bhaktas are just three in serial order.

'"He Prabhu! Do kripa on me that I become the kinkar of the bhakta of Your bhakta's bhakta. Please don't let me become immersed in moha," said Naradji. My father, Brahma, was born from Your lotus-like naval, so I am Your grandson. This is one relationship we have. I am also Your bhakta. So, please protect me!"

Tears flowed from Naradji's eyes as he spoke. "I have come to You at the command of my father, Brahmaji. I will quote him: He Ramachandra, the most superior of the dynasty of Raghu! The purpose of Your birth is to kill Ravana. Your father, Dashrath, will anoint You on the throne as the Raja of Ayodhya. You will get engrossed in Your new duties. You won't kill Ravana. You have vowed to remove the burden of the Prithivi. Please be true to Your word, because You are Satya-sandha – associated with Satya."

Bhagwan Rama smiled when Naradji finished talking. He said, "Narad, I understand everything. I am fully aware of all you have told Me. Nothing is unknown to Me. I will fulfill My vow; there is no doubt about that. However, everything will be done when the time is right. Ravana and the other Rakshasas have done tapasya and procured great shakti. When their prarabdha is used up, little by little, I will kill them. For this purpose I will go to the Dandak aranya tomorrow. I will stay in the garb of a Muni for fourteen years. I will make Sita My excuse for killing Ravana and his whole clan."'

There is an amazing point in this. Bhagwan gives salvation to Ravana even by going to the extent of allowing him to abduct Sitaji! Bhagwan just wants an excuse to do the uddhar of His bhaktas!

It is not that Ajamil sat with a mala in his hand doing one lakh japa of 'Hare Rama, Hare Rama'. Ajamil called out to his son whose name was Narayana. Bhagwan used this as an excuse to give him salvation. In the same way, He used an excuse to kill Ravana and other paapis, and give them Mukti. Bhagwan does not need any reason to do kripa. He is *akaarana karunaa varunaalaya* - an ocean of compassion without reason or cause!

'Bhagwan Ramachandra said, "I will destroy all that weighs Prithivi down. I will kill Ravana and his Asuras using the excuse of Sita's abduction."

Naradji's eyes filled with tears of anand when he heard Bhagwan Rama's words. He did Rama's pradakshina three times, did dandavat pranam, and departed after taking leave of Ramachandra.

Any person who thinks about, or describes, this conversation between Narad and Rama gets Moksha-Kaivalya, which even Devtas cannot obtain easily.'

Somebody may ask, 'can a person get Moksha just like that?'

No. There is a rule in this – *kaivalyam viratipurah saram krame`na* – first, there is a vairagya from this sansara of name and form. The antahkarana becomes shuddha. A vritti for Gnan arises in the shuddha antahkarana, and agnan is removed after that. The removal of agnan is Mukti. The person realizes that the Atma is the only Satya.

Mukti is not like petty cash that can be picked up and given to anyone. There is a method for removing the obstacles to Mukti that are there in the antahkarana. Mukti is attained when these obstacles are removed by the use of the methods given.

Ayodhya Kanda

The Second Sarga

Preparations for the Rajyabhishek

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha.

Atha raajaa dashrathah kadaachidrahasi sthitah,

vasishtham svakulaachaaryamaahooye`damabhaashata. 2. 1

Bhagavaan raamamakhilalaah prashansanti muhurmuhuh,

pauraashcha nigamaa vriddhaa mantrinashcha vishe`shatah. 2. 2

Tatah sarvagunope`tam raamam raajeevalochanam,

jye`shtham raajye`abhishe`kshyaami vridddhoaham munipungava. 2. 3

Bharato maatulam drashtum gatah shatrughnasamyutah,

ahishe`kshye` shva e`vaashu bhavanstachchaanumodataam.2. 4

Sambhaaraah sambhrayantaam cha gachchha mantraya raaghavam,

uchchhreeyantaam pataakaashcha naanaavarnaah samantatah. 2. 5

Toranaani vichitraani svarnamukttaamayaani vai,

aahooya mantrinam raajaa sumantram mantrisattamam. 2. 6

Aagnaapayati yadyattvaam munistattatsamaanaya,

yauvaraajye`abhishe`kshyaami shvobhoote` raghunandanam. 2. 7

Tathe`ti harshaatsa munim kim karomeetyabhaashata,

tamuvaacha mahaate`jaa vasishtho gnaaninaam varah. 2. 8

Shvah prabhaate` madhyakakshe` kanyakaah svarnabhooshitaah,

tishthantu shodasha gajah svarnaratnaadibhooshitah. 2. 9

Chaturdantah samaayaatu airaavatakulodbhavah,

naanaateerthodakaih poornaah svarnakumbhaah sahasrashah. 2. 10
Sthaapyantaam navavaiyaaghracharmaani treeni chaanaya,
shve`tachchhatram ratnadandam mukttaamaniviraajitam. 2. 11
Divyamaalyaani vastraani divyaanyaabharanaani cha,
munayah satkritaastatra tishthantu kushapaanayah. 2. 12
Nartakyo vaaramukhyaashcha gaayakaa ve`nukaastathaa,
naanaavaaditrakushalaa vaadyantu nripaangane`. 2. 13
Hastyashvarathapaadaataa bahisthishthantu saayudhaah,
nagare` yaani nishthanti de`vataayatanaani cha. 2. 14
Te`shu pravartataam poojaa naanaabalibhiraadritaa,
raajaanah sheeghramaayaantu naanopaayanapaanayah. 2 15
Ityaadishya munih shreemaan sumantram nripamantrinam,
svayam jagaama bhavanam raaghavasyaatishobhanam. 2. 16
Rathamaaruhya bhagavaanvasishthto munisattamah,
treeni kakshaanyatikramya rathaatkshitimavaatarat. 2. 17
Antah pravishya bhavanam svaachaaryatvaadavaaritah,
gurumaagatamaagnaaya raamastoornam kritaanjalih. 2. 18
Pratyugdmya namaskritya dandavat bhakttisamyutah,
svarnapaatre`na paaneeyamaaninaayaashu jaanakee. 2. 19
Ratnaasane` samaave`shya paadau prakshaalyabhakttitah,
tadapah shirasaa dritvaa seetayaa saha raaghavah. 2. 20
Dhanyoasmeetyabraveedraamastava paadaambudhaaranaat,
shreeraame`naivamukttastu prahasanmunirabraveet. 2. 21
Tvatpaadasalilam dritvaa dhanyoabhoodgirijaapatih,

brahmaapi matpitaa te` hi paadateerthahataashubhah. 2. 22

Idaaneem bhaashase` yattvam lokaanaamupade`shakrit,

jaanaami tvaam paraatmaanam lakshmyaa sanjaatameeshvaram. 2. 23

De`vakaaryaarthasiddhayartham bhakttaanaam bhakttisiddhaye`,

raavanaasya vadhaarthaaya jaatam jaanaami raaghava. 2. 24

Tathaapi de`vakaaryaartham guhyam nodghatyaamahyam,

yathaa tvam maayayaa sarvam karoshi raghunandana. 2. 25

Tathaivaanuvidhaasye`aham shishyastvam gururapyaham,

gururguroonaam tvam de`va pitrinaam tvam pitaamahah. . 26

Antaryaamee jagadyaatraavaahakastvamagocharah,

shuddhasattvamayam de`ham dritvaa svaadheenasambhavam. 2. 27

Manushya iva loke`asmin bhaasi tvam yogamaayayaa,

paurohityamaham jaane` vigarhya dooshyajeevanam. 2. 28

Ikshavaakoonaam kule` raamah paramaatmaa janishyate`,

iti gnaatam mayaa poorvam brahmanaa kathitam puraa. 2. 29

Tatoahamaashayaa raama tava sambandhakaankshayaa,

akaarsham garhitamapi tavaachaaryatvasiddhaye`. 2. 30

Tato manoratho me`adya falito raghunandana,

tvadadheenaa mahaamaayaa sarvalokaikamohinee. 2. 31

Maam yathaa mohaye`nnaiva tathaa kuru raghoodvaha,

gurunishkritikaamastvam yadi de`hye`tade`va me`. 2. 32

Prasangaatsarvamapyukttam na vaachyam kutrachinmayaa,

raagnaa dasharathe`naaham pre`shitoasmi raghoodvaha. 2. 33

Tvaamaamantrayitum raajye` shvoabhishe`kshyati raaghavaa,
adya tvam seetayaa saardhamupavaasam yathaavidhi. 2. 34
Kritvaa shuchirbhoomishaayee bhava raama jite`ndriyah,
gachchhaami raajaasaannidhyam tvam tu praatargamishyasih. 2. 35
Ityuktvaa rathamaaruhya yayau raajagururdrutam,
raamoapi lakshmanam drishtvaa prahasannidamabraveet. 2. 36
Saumitre` yauvaraajye` me` shvoabhishe`ko bhavishyati,
nimittamaatrame`vaaham kartaa bhoktaa tvame`va hi. 2. 37
Mama tvam hi bahihpraana naatra kaaryaa vichaaranaa,
tato vasishthe`na yathaa bhaashitam tattathaakarot. 2. 38
Vasishthoapi nripam gatvaa kritam sarvam nyave`dayat,
vasishthasya puro raagnaa hyakttam raamaabhishe`chanam. 2. 39
Yadaa tadaiva nagare` shrutvaa kashchitpumaan jagau,
kausalyaayai raamamaatre` sumitraayai tathaiva cha. 2. 40
Shrutvaa te` harshasampoorne` dadatuharimuttamam,
tasmai tatah preetamanaat kausalyaa putravatsalaa. 2. 41
Lakshmeem paryacharadde`veem raamasyaarthaprasiddhaye`,
satyavaadee dasharathah karotye`va pratishrutam. 2. 42
Kaike`yeevashagah kintu kaamukah kim karishyati,
iti vyaakulachittaa saa durgaam de`veemapoojayat. 2. 43
E`tasminnantare` de`vaa de`veem vaaneemachodayan,
gachchha de`vi bhuvo lokamayodhyaayaam prayatnatah. 2. 44
Raamaabhishe`kavighnaartham yatasva brahmavaakyatah,
mantharaam pravishasvaadau kaike`yeem cha tatah param. 2. 45

Tato vighne` samutpanne` punare`hi divam shubhe`,

tathe`tyuktvaa tathaa chakre` pravive`shaatha mantharaam. 2. 46

Saapi kubjaa trivakraa tu praasaadaagramathaaruhat,

nagaram parito drishtvaa sarvatah samalankritam. 2. 47

Naanaatoranasambaadham pataakaabhiralankritam,

sarvotsavasamaayukttam vismitaa punaraagamat. 2. 48

Dhaatreem paprachchha maatah kim nagaram samalankritam,

naanotsavasamaayukttaa kausalyaa chaatiharshitaa. 2. 49

Dadaati vipramukhye`bhyo vastraani vividhaani cha,

taamuvaacha tadaa dhaatree raamachandraabhishe`chanam. 2. 50

Shvo bhavishyati te`naadya sarvatoalankritam puram,

tatshrutvaa tvaritam gatvaa kaike`yeem vaakyamabraveet. 2. 51

Paryankasthaam vishaalaaksheeme`kaante` paryavasthitaam,

kim she`she` durbhage` moodhe` mahadbhayamupasthim. 2. 52

Na jaaneeshe`atisaundrayanaaninee mattagaaminee. 2. 53

Raamasyaanugrahaadraagnah shvaabhishe`ko bhavishyati,

tachchhrutvaa sahasotthaaya kaike`yee priyavaadinee. 2. 54

Tasyai divyam dadau svarnanoopuram ratnabhooshitam,

harshasthaane` kimiti me` kathyate` bhayamaagatam. 2. 55

Bharataadadhiko raamah priyakrinme` priyamvadah,

kausalyaam maam samam pashyan sadaa shushrooshate` hi maam. 2. 56

Raamaadbhayam kimaapannam tava moodhe` vadasva me`,

tachchhrutvaa vishasaadaatha kubjaakaaranavairinee. 2. 57

Shrunu madvachanam de`vi yathaartham te` mahadbhayam,
tvaam toshayan sadaa raajaa priyavaakyaani bhaashate`. 2. 58
Kaamukoatathyavaadee cha tvaam vaachaa paritoshayan,
kaaryam karoti tasya vai raamamaatuh supushkalam. 2. 59
Manasye`tannidhaayaiya pre`shayaamaasa te` sutam,
bharatam maatulakule` pre`shayaamaasa saanujam. 2. 60
Sumitraayaah sameecheenam bhavishyati na sanshayah,
lakshmano raamamanve`ti raajyam soanubhavishyati. 2. 61
Bharato raaghavasyaagre` kinkaro vaa bhavishyati,
vivaasyate` vaa nagaraatpraanairvaa haapyate`achiraat. 2. 62
Tvam tu daaseeva kausalyaam nityam paricharishyasi,
tatoapi maranam shre`yo yatsapatnyaah paraabhavah. 2. 63
Atah sheeghram yatasvaadya bharatasyaabhishe`ahane`,
raamasya vanavaasaartham varshaani nava pancha cha. 2. 64
Tato roodhoabhaye` putrastava raagni bhavishyati,
upaayam te` pravakshyaami poorvame`va sunishchitam. 2. 65
Puraa de`vaasure` yuddhe` raajaa dasharathah svayam,
indre`na yaachito dhanvee sahaayaartham mahaarathah. 2. 66
Jagaama se`nayaa saardham tvayaa saha shubhaabane`,
yuddham prakurvatastasya raakshasaih saha dhanvinah. 2. 67
Tadaakshakeelo nyapatachchhinnastasya na ve`da sah,
tvam tu hastam samaave`shya keelarandhre`atidhairyutah. 2. 68
Sthitavatyasitaapaangi patipraanapareepsayaa,
tato hatvaasuraansarvaan dadarsha tvaamarindamah. 2. 69

Aashcharyam paramam le`bhe`tvaamaalingya mudaanvitah,
vrineeshva yatte` manasi vaanchchhitam varadosmyadam. 2. 70
Varadvayam vrineeshva tvame`vam raajaavadatsvayam,
tvayoktto varado raajanyadi dattam varadvayam. 2. 71
Tvayye`va tishthatu chiram nyaasabhootam mamaanagha,
yadaa me`avasaro bhooyaattadaa de`hi varadvayam. 2. 72
Tathe`tyuktvaa svayam raajaa mandiram vraja suvrate`,
tvattah shrutam mayaa poorvamidaaneem smritimaagatam. 2. 73
Atah sheeghram pravishyaadya krodhaagaaram rushaanvitaa,
vimuchya sarvaabharanam sarvato vinikeerya cha,
bhoomaave`va shayaanaa tvam tooshneemaatishtha bhaamini.2. 74
Yaavatsatyam pratignaaya raajaabheeshtam karoti te`,
shrutuvaa trivakrayokttam tattadaa ke`kayanandinee. 2. 75
Tatthyame`vaakhilam me`ne` duhsangaahitavibhramaa,
taamaaha kaike`yee dushtaa kutaste` buddhireedrishee. 2. 76
E`vam tvaam buddhisampannam na jaane` vakrasundari,
bharato yadi raajaa me` bhavishyati sutah priyah. 2. 77
Graamaan shatam pradaasyaami mama tvam praanavallabhaa,
ityuktvaa kopabhavanam pravishya sahasaa rushaa. 2. 78
Vimuchya sarvaabharanam parikeerya samantatah,
bhoomau shayaanaa malinaa malinaambaradhaarinee. 2. 79
Provaacha shrunu me` kubje` yaavadraamo vanam vraje`t,
praanaanstyakshye`atha vaa vakre` shayishye` taavade`va hi. 2. 80
Nishchayam kuru kalyaani kalyaanam te` bhavishyati,

ityuktvaa prayayau kubjaa graham saapi tathaakarot. 2. 81

'One day, Raja Dashrath asked Vasishthaji to come and meet him privately. He said, "Bhagavan, all the people praise Rama repeatedly."'

In the Valmiki Ramayana the last two chapters before the Ayodhya Kanda contain matter that is worth writing in golden letters and proclaiming in every home. The first of these describes Ramachandra's gunas. There is a long list of His virtues and good qualities. The second of these describe what the elders of the City, the Municipal Counsellors, Ministers, and respected citizens say about Rama. They state emphatically that Rama alone is the most suited to be the Raja. Apart from being the eldest, He is also the most superior among Dashrath's sons.

'Dashrath said, "I have grown old. I want Rama to be crowned as the Raja. Bharat has gone to his Mama's house. I want that Rama's abhishek should be done tomorrow itself."'

According to the Valimiki Ramayana, the indication in this is that Rama's abhishek should be done while Bharat and Shatrughna are away.

It is said that Kaikeyi's father, Ashwapati, had made a condition when he gave permission for Dashrath to marry Kaikeyi. The condition was that Kaikeyi's son would be the Raja after Dashrath.

Raja Dashrath had immense prema for Rama. Furthermore, Rama was his eldest son, so it was appropriate that Kausalya's son be crowned as the next Raja. It was in Dashrath's mind that Rama should become the Raja before anybody from Kaikeyi's family objected on the grounds of the promise he had made to Kaikeyi's father, about her son being crowned the King after him.

Another factor was the varadaan Dashrath had given Kaikeyi just after the battle between the Devtas and the Asuras. Dashrath had faught in support of the Devtas and they had won the battle. During the battle,

a wheel of Dashrath's chariot nearly came off because the nail by which it was supported broke. Kaikeyi put her finger in place of the nail. This saved Dashrath's life and the battle was won. Dashrath did not even know of it until later. When he came to know of it he was overwhelmed by Kaikeyi's courage and love for him. He told Kaikeyi to ask for a varadaan.

Kaikeyi certainly wanted a varadaan, but she did not speak until Dashrath told her repeatedly to ask for anything she wanted from him. Then she said, 'if you want to give me a varadaan, give me two varadaans. I don't need anything at present, but I will ask for what I need when the time comes.'

'Manthara reminded Kaikeyi of the two varadaan Dashrath had promised her'

This became Dashrath's *neecha* – meaning, lowly – sharanagati because he said he would do whatever Kaiyeyi asked. It became Kaikeyi's lowly sharanagati when she took advice from Manthara. Taking the refuge of a lowly person is always harmful. Sharanagati should be that of a more elevated person, not of a person whose thinking is lowly. The fact is that when you associate with people whose mentality is lowly, your mana becomes sullied. You should do Satsang with people whose spiritual level is higher than yours.

Dashrathji's mana was filled with prema for Rama. He felt that breaking his promise to Ashwapati was less important than Rama being crowned as the Raja. He wanted to make it publicly known that Rama's abhishek would be done the following morning.

'Raja Dashrath told Guru Vasishtha, "I want your approval for getting Rama's abhishek done tomorrow. Let all the preparations for this be done."

Dashrath gave Vasishtha no scope to give his opinion. He began to give the orders for collecting everything that would be required, and for the city to be decorated with festoons and flags. He called his trusted

Minister Sumantra and said, “please obey every command given by Guruji implicitly. I want Ramachandra’s abhishek to be done tomorrow.”

Sumantra asked Vasishthaji about the arrangements he should make. Vasishthaji said, “richly ornamented maidens should stand in the middle chamber. Outside, there should be elephants with four tusks. Vessels of water from the different Tirthas should be kept ready for the abhishek. A tiger skin, an ornamental umbrella with a gem-studded handle, beautiful garlands, beautiful garments and beautiful ornaments should be kept ready. A group of Munis – who are ascetics – should stand with bunches of kusha grass in their hands to give blessings. Dancers, musicians, vocalists, flautists, elephants, horses, and foot soldiers should all come out after the abhishek and do puja in the Mandirs within the city walls and outside the city walls. The Rajas of our neighbouring Kingdoms should be invited to attend the abhishek bringing their tributes. “

After explaining everything in detail to Sumantra, Vasishtha went to Ramachandra’s residence. His chariot crossed over the three gateways and then he descended and went into the palace. When Ramachandra heard that His Gurudev has come, He went forth quickly to welcome His Guru. He did dandavat pranam. Janakiji came, carrying a gold vessel for washing the feet of the Guru. They made Guruji sit on a throne studded with precious stones and washed his feet with great prema and reverence. Sita-Rama sprinkled the water with which they washed Guruji’s feet on their heads.

Ramachandra told Vasishtha, “I am blessed to sprinkle your charanamrita on My head.”

Vasishthaji smiled. “The main purpose of Dharma is to weaken vasana and ahankara,” he said. “If a person adheres to Dharma in his behaviour, and the result is increased ahankara for having done a great Yagna or something, Dharma goes onto the wrong track. Vasana

is increased because of the expectation of some worldly fruit in return. Vasana and ahankara divert the direction of Dharma. Therefore, all the actions given in the Dharma Shastra are meant to reduce ahankara and vasana."'

Don't think that when you do seva, it is to reduce the ahankara or vasana of the person whose seva you do. Don't think that he has a vasana in him to get his feet washed and that he feels pleased when you do so. There was a doctor in Kanpur who threw away the water after washing my feet. Then he washed my feet again with water that had been boiled, and sprinkled that water on his head. When I drank Gangajal, he would tell me, 'Maharaj, you are drinking poison! Please boil and strain the Gangajal before drinking it.' Sometimes Maji – the matriarch of the J.K. family – gave me a laddoo to eat. The doctor would say, 'your bhaktas are making you eat harmful things.'

'Ramachandra said, "Gurudev, I am blessed to get your charanamrita."

Vasishthaji smiled. "Shankarji was dhanya – and so was my father Brahma – to get Your charanamrita, Rama! All that was inauspicious for them died when they got the water with which Your feet were washed. You are telling me this to give upadesh and teach people. I know that You are the sakshat Paramatma and have manifested, along with Laxmi, on this earth as a manushya, in order to kill Ravana. You have kept this a secret in order to carry out the promise You made to the Devtas."'

Sarvam sampadtapte` bhadre` de`vaguhyam susamvritam.

The more secret matters concerning the Devtas are kept, the greater their success. If you ever have any miraculous experience – like the darshan of a Devta, or some prasad, some siddhi comes to you – it will remain if you don't talk about it to anybody. It will leave you if you talk about it.

The Bhagwat says, *'yogaantaraa yaanmaune`na'.*

How can a person overcome the obstacles that arise when a person practices Yoga?

The answer is, 'by mauna; by not talking about it.'

That means, if you talk about your spiritual progress, obstacles will arise and block your progress. People will surround you and take advantage of your siddhis. That is why the secret matters concerning Devtas should not be spoken of. Mahatmas check to see whether a person who knows of their siddhi has the capacity to keep this knowledge to himself.

'Vasishthaji said, "I am not exposing the secret that everyting You do is done by Maya. I will do whatever You want. You are the shishya and I am the Guru, but the fact is, You are the Guru of all Gurus! You are the originator of all the ancestors. You are the antaryami and also a traveller of this jagat. Nobody can see You, but it is You who does everything. Your shareer is shuddha sattvamaya – it is pure existence; not created by past karmas. It is created at Your own wish – *ichchhaamaya nara de`ha samhaare`. Svaadheena sambhavam* – Your janma is svadheen, it is an independent decision of Yours. You move in the jagat like a manushya, with the power of Your Yoga-Maya."'

Yoga-Maya means, *'yogaaya yaa maayaa* – the Maya that helps a person to get connected to Bhagwan. It is the shakti that connects a jeeva to the Ishwara. The Maya that draws you to the Ishwara and connects you to Him is Yoga-Maya.

'"It is because of Your Yoga-Maya that You appear to be a manushya. I am aware that the work of a Purohit – conducting rituals for a family – is full of doshas. However, I consented to be the purohit of Your family because my father, Brahma, told me that You would be born in the Ikshavaku vansha in future. I had harboured a hope over several births that I would get connected with You in some way. I wanted to be Your Guru, and You to be my shishya. To achieve this relationship I undertook the inadmirable work of an Acharya."'

When a Brahmin agrees to be a purohit – a family priest who does all the rituals – he sometimes has to accept the daan of money that family members touch to the hand of a dying man or woman. Shri Udiya Babaji Maharaj would forbid us to eat at an *anna-kshe`tra* – a charitable kitchen. He told us, 'Sadhus should not eat the food of an annakshetra because it is purchased by donations that include money that was touched to the hand of a dying person. Or else, it is money given by people who ask Bhagwan to fulfil some desire and they would give a certain amount of money in thanks.'

'"The work of a purohit is to take upon himself the paapa of the person who paid his monthly stipend – *vigarhya dooshyajeevanam.* When I heard that Bhagwan Shri Rama will be born in the Ikshavaku vansha, I consented to do this lowly work – *tvaachaaryatvasiddhye`* - in order to become Your Acharya. Ramachandra! My heartfelt desire over ages is fulfilled today!"'

Look, you can think about how Vasishthji's long standing desire was fulfilled. Some years ago, Umapati, a great vidvan who lived in Ayodhya quite recently, considered Ramachandra to be his shishya. 'I am the Guru and Ramachandra is my shishya', he would say. Whenever he went to the Mandir he took off the garland he wore and put it round the neck of Ramachandra Bhagwan's murti.

There is a murti of Bhagwan Rama in a Mandir close to Ayodhya's Lakshmankila. It is called 'Gurusadan Behari'. Even now, the murti's head is bent forward in the same position as it bent when Umapatiji garlanded the murti so many years ago.

Bhagwan protects the bhava of His bhaktas. The local people had a bhandara – a feast for Sadhus and Brahmins – one day, at that Mandir. The Vaishnavas mocked Umapatiji, who was the Mahant of the Ashram the Mandir was attached to. 'He talks of being a siddha; let us test him today!' They planned to eat as much jackfruit as they could, so it would run short and Umapatiji would be disgraced.

Maharaj was displeased when he heard of the crisis. He went into the Mandir with a cane in his hand. 'I am old now, and You are not making the necessary arrangements! What kind of a shishya are You?'

Suddenly the kitchen stores were filled with jackfruit! The Vaishnavas ate their fill. Bhagwan Shri Ramachandra attends to the wishes of His bhaktas and vindicates their faith.

Vasishthaji is Ramji's sakshat Gurudev!

'Vasishthaji said, "the desire of my heart is fulfilled today. This Maha-Maya of Yours deludes everybody, but is subservient to You – please do kripa on me that Your Maya does not delude me. If You wish to be free of Your debt to Your Guru, do this daan – *maam yathaa mohaye`nnaiva tathaa kuru raghoodvaha* – that Your Maya never creates confusion in my thinking. That will repay Your Guru-rin. Furthermore, don't tell anybody about what I have said. Raja Dashrath has sent me to tell You that You will be crowned tomorrow. Today, both You and Sita must observe upavasa – you must fast according to the rules. You should sleep on the floor, not on Your bed. And, you should restrain your indriyas. I will go to the Raja now. You go to him in the morning."

Having said all this, the Raj-Guru climbed onto his chariot and drove off. Ramachandra saw Lakshman standing there and smiled at him. "Lakshman!" He said, "My abhishek is to be done tomorrow morning. I am merely the nimitta – you are the real Raja, and I am the means for your comfort and pleasure – *nimittamaatrame`vaaham kartaa bhokttaa tvame`va hi."*

Lakshman said, "my brother! You will have to manage the Rajya!"'

Rama could not sleep unless Lakshman was with Him. He would eat only if Lakshman ate with Him. Lakshman is Rama's external prana. He is Sankarshan, the power of the prana-shakti. Lakshman is the name of Rama's strength. Had Lakshman not been with Rama as the flagpole on which the flag flies, the pennant of Rama's fame and glory would

not be flying high. Lakshman had the power to spread Shri Rama's glory wherever he wanted.

Had there been a confrontation between Parashuram and Ramachandra it would not have enhanced Shri Rama's kirti. Lakshmanji drew Parashuram's ire on himself and Rama's behaviour was very refined. If Lakshman had not spoken up at the time of the Dhanush-Yagna, would Rama have volunteered to break Shivaji's dhanush?

It is written clearly in the Valmiki Ramayana that Lakshmanji was ready to imprison Raja Dashrath and crown Rama the Raja. He would have killed anyone who opposed him. When he saw Bharat's army approaching Chitrakoot he was filled with rage because he thought Bharat was coming with the intention to attack Rama. Rama is supremely compassionate, but Lakshmanji's nature is a bit fiery in Rama's welfare! It is this that enhances Shri Rama's compassion.

'Shri Rama said, "you are My external prana, Lakshman! You don't need to worry about anything. We should just do what Vasishthaji has told us to do."

Vasishthaji went to Raja Dashrath and informed him of the instructions he had given to Rama. Rama's mother Kausalya, Sumitra, and others were filled with happiness at the proposed crowning of Rama. There was nobody who would go to Kaikeyi to tell her what was being planned. Kausalya, filled with anand, did Laxmiji's puja, praying for Rama's success in every way. She prayed that Dashrath would not deviate from his intention to make Rama the Raja.'

The mother of Bhagwan Rama is greater than the Bhagavati Devi; she doesn't need to do the Devi's puja. However, there was some doubt in her mana, because she knew Dashrath's weakness for Kaikeyi; he could not be depended upon to keep his word in face of her opposition. Kausalya knew how greatly Dashrath loved Ramachandra, but she was uncertain about his ability to withstand an adverse

decision taken by Kaikeyi. Prema for Rama made her fearful of harm coming to Him.

Anishthaashankinee bandhuhridyaani bhavanti – the hriday of a person who loves is always anxious about the welfare of the loved one. Laxmiji's aradhana was done for the successful abhishek and Durga's aradhana was done to ward off any obstacles that may arise.

There are people who believe that aradhana should be done only of the Ishtadev and no other Devta. Such people will not understand Kausalya's action. The eleventh canto of the Bhagwat has some comments on siddhis. It gives the method by which some siddhis are obtained. For example, doing dhyana of the sookshma roop of the pancha tanmatras gives the siddhi of becoming sookshma. The meaning of this is that the kind of upadhi of the Parameshwara a person does sadhana for is the kind of siddhi he gets.

The gopis prayed, 'He Katyayini Devi! He Maha-Maya! Let this Krishna, son of Nanda, be our pati.' The people of Vraja go to do the puja of Devi Durga, and people go to Pashupati when Shri Krishna gets lost when He goes to Jambavan's cave.

The Vaishnavas who believe that they should not do puja of Shakti are certainly not greater Vaishnavas than mother Kausalya! The fact is that Bhagwan being worshipped in many forms is an indication that He is separate from all forms. The puja of the Parameshwara done with the upadhi of a form gives the kind of fruit that that particular upadhi is known for. For example, Laxmiji gives prosperity, Saraswatiji gives learning, and Ganeshji removes obstacles.

'Kausalya began to do puja of Durga Devi. The Devtas started to panic. If Rama became the Raja, how would their purpose of His killing Ravana be achieved? They prayed to Vani Devi – Saraswati – to go to Ayodhya in the Mrityu-loka, and place a vighna in Ramachandra's proposed abhishek. 'This is what Brahmaji wants,' they added.

Manthara seems to be guilty of being the cause of foiling Ramachandra's abhishek. Why is Kaikeyi blamed?

Shri Ramachandra told Bharatji, *'dosu de`hin janani hun jada te`yee, jinha guru sadhu sabhaa nahin se`yee* – only those who have never associated with a Guru, or Sadhus will blame your mother.' The fruit of Satsang is not to see doshas. Bhagwan is seen even where there are doshas, because nothing but Bhagwan is seen when a person gets Satsang regularly.

The Devtas spoke about Brahmaji's aagna, and Brahmaji would have acted as per Narayana's wish. It was because of Narayana's wish that Brahmaji sent his consort, Saraswati, to Ayodhya. 'Sit on Manthara's tongue first,' he said. 'Then, sit on Kaikeyi's tongue. Then, after the Rajyabhishek is successfully cancelled, go back to your own loka.'

So, Vak-devi Saraswati went into Manthara.

'The hunchback woman climbed on to the terrace and saw that the whole city was lit up and decorated with festoons and flags. She came down and asked the maid servants, "why is there such celebration? Why is daan being given so lavishly at Kausalya's palace? What is happening?"'

If a person does not give daan when he gets anand – if his miserliness is not removed even when he gets sukha – it means he is heartless!

'"Has Kausalya heard some very good news, that she has become so generous?" asked Manthara. The people told her that Ramachandra's abhishek was planned for the next morning. That was the reason for all the decorations and preparations and daan.

Kaikeyi was lying on her bed. Her eyes were large – she was very beautiful. She was alone.'

Just see how this dasi – this Manthara – is intimate and impudent enough to speak so freely with her mistress.

‘She said, “you ill-fated woman! You fool! A cause of great fear has come up and you lie in bed without any concern!”’

A woman whose maid servant speaks like this is sure to get dukha in her life. A servitor should speak respectfully. The people who have written the rules of right conduct have said that if the patni is promiscuous, the friend is a miser, the servant is insolent, and there is a snake in the house – these are four things that become a cause of death.

‘This presumptuous dasi told Kaikeyi, “you are not even aware of the danger that looms over you. You are filled with vanity for your own beauty and walk like an intoxicated person. Raja is doing Ramachandra’s abhishek tomorrow.”
Kaikeyi sat up. She spoke with great prema. “Here – take this gold anklet of mine. It is studded with precious stones. It is a reward for giving me such good news! My prema for Rama is even greater than my prema for Bharat.”’

There is not a single character in the Ramayana who does not have prema for Shri Ramachandra Bhagwan, whether covert or overt. It is His great quality that arouses immense prema wherever He goes.

‘Kaikeyi told Manthara that her prema for Rama was stronger than her prema for her own son. “Rama talks to me with such prema – he considers me his mother, at par with Kausalya. He does my seva. *Raamadbhayam kimaapannam* – how can there be any fear from Rama? Oh, you stupid woman! What cause of fear can there be from Rama?”’

From this you can understand that the tongue – meaning, faculty of speech – of a person who is headed for misfortune becomes bad first. When this Vak-devi comes from Swarga and pollutes the way a manushya talks, you can take it that he is on a downhill path. How can anybody progress in life if his speech is sullied? People cannot control a tongue that weighs just over an ounce; how can they control their

indriyas? The speech becomes sullied when a person's behaviour is detrimental. This is a warning sign. Therefore, my brother, be alert that your tongue doesn't get sullied.

This hunchback woman took pleasure in doing harm for no reason.

'Manthara said, "Truly, Devi, a great danger looms ahead for you. You are being deceived by your pati."'

This is a point that is calculated to create a rift between the pati-patni. No well-wisher will spread such poison. You would all have heard that the Dharma-Shastra says that no third person should interfere between a pati-patni, father-son, and two brothers. If they stand together, no third person should get between them.

My grandfather would rebuke me if I passed close to two brothers who were standing together. To me it seemed a matter of no importance. I could not understand why I was rebuked. The point is that interference can do much harm and create misunderstanding and strife.

'Manthara's first action was to create a rift between Kaikeyi and Raja Dashrath. She told Kaikeyi, "Look; on the surface it seems that the Raja favours you. He talks sweetly to you. However, he is untruthful to you when it suits him. He satisfies you with his vani, but he does what benefits Kausalya.

There was deceit in the Raja's hriday when he sent off your son, Bharat, with his Mama; else, what was the need for him to be sent off like that? The Raja had an ulterior motive. Sumitra won't be harmed in any way because Lakshman always stays with Rama. Lakshman will get experience in ruling. Bharat will have to stay as Rama's kinkar in future. It is quite possible that Rama sends him away from Ayodhya or even has him killed in future. You will become Kausalya's dasi and do her seva. You will be defeated at the hands of your sauta – even death is better than such a fate!

And so, Deviji, don't relax on your bed! Make an effort for Bharat's abhishek to be done instead, and have Rama sent for vanavas for fourteen years. Within that time Bharat will be firmly established as the Raja. Your son will have nothing to fear after that. I will even tell you how this can be achieved."'

Kaikeyi listened to Manthara. That means, had Saraswati not come and sat on her tongue, she would have rebuked Manthara from the very start. Saraswati sat on Manthara's tongue and spoke convincingly, and she sat on Kaikeyi's tongue and stopped her from objecting to what Manthara said. The poisonous talk went deep into Kaikeyi's mana through her ears.

'The method suggested by Manthara was connected to Dashrath's going to war against the Asuras to help Indra. "The Raja took you with him, along with his army. When the battle was at its fiercest, the nail that held the wheel of the Raja's chariot broke. The wheel was in danger of coming off. The chariot would have broken and the Raja would have been killed. The Devtas would have lost. Dashrath did not even know of the danger he was in. You put your hand in place of the nail and saved the situation. Dashrath emerged victorious. You saved your pati's life. Dashrath was amazed when he saw what you had done. He embraced you joyfully and told you to ask for a varadaan."'

The 'Anand Ramayana' has a story that Kaikeyi did great seva of a Sant when she was a little girl. Pleased with her, the Sant had given her the varadaan that no harm could come to her hands.

'Manthara said, "when Dashrath told you to ask for any varadaan, you had said, 'Maharaj, you are mine! What more can I want? I have no need for anything, but if you want to give me a varadaan, please give me two varadaans. I will keep them in trust with you and ask for what I need when the time comes.' Since that day, the Raja has been your slave. You had told me about this and I remember it well.

Now, do as I say. Become angry and go into the kopa-bhavan. Deviji! You don't even know how to get angry! I will have to teach you even that!"'

At times, an artificial kopa is needed to reawaken prema. Going into the kopa-bhavan should not be real; it should be an artificial anger, shown for the benefit of the loved one. It should be to complain that the pati neglects his health by not eating properly, or not getting enough rest. A patni should show her displeasure when her pati harms himself in any way; not for any selfish reason.

'Manthara taught Kaikeyi how to display anger. "Go into the kopa-bhavan. Take off your jewellery and fine garments and strew them on the ground. Don't have the thought that you will use them again. Put on a coarse, dirty sari and lie down on the ground. Refuse to say a single word until the Raja swears to do whatever you want."'

Kaikeyi believed everything Manthara told her – *duhsangaahitavibhramaa.* There was no vikar in Kaikeyi's mana so long as she associated with Dashrath and Kausalya. Wrong understanding comes from dusang – associating with the wrong kind of people.

'Kaikeyi said, "Oh! I don't know from where you get such buddhi, Manthara! Your form is all twisted but your buddhi is sharp! If my son Bharat becomes the Raja I will give you hundreds of villages. You will be dear to me as life itself!"

Then Kaikeyi went inside the kopa-bhavan and took off her ornaments and garments, donned dirty, coarse clothes and lay down on the bare floor. "Look, Kubja," she said, "I will lie like this until Rama goes to the vana, even if I die!" "Your resolve is unwavering, Devi," said Manthara. "Your mission will be successful!" She gave ashirvad to Kaikeyi. Who but Kubja could give ashirvad for a thing like this?'

See the conclusion given in this Ramayana.

Dheeroatyantadayaanivitoapi sagunaachaaraanvito vaathavaa neetigno vidhivaadade`shikaparo vidyaavive`kaathavaa,

dushtaanaamatipaapabhaavitadhiyaam sangam sadaa che`dbhaje`ttadbuddhyaa paribhaavito vrajati tat saamyam krame`na sfutam. 2. 82

In this episode it is absolutely clear that no matter how resolute a person is – no matter how compassionate, virtuous, and staunch in his belief in right conduct and adhering to Dharma, loyal, Guru-bhakta, spiritual, learned, having vivek etc – his buddhi will be corrupted if he associates with anyone whose hriday is filled with paapa.

Everything made by Prakriti creates a vikar in that object. It can be refined and made lofty only by inculcating sanskaras. Vikriti cannot be erased without sanskaras.

People who don't get the ritual of the Yagnopaveet done don't know the Gayatri Mantra or how to do the ritual of Sandhya Vandan. Even the letters of the alphabet are learnt through a sanskara. Children are taught the right way of eating – that is a sanskara. People who dismiss the importance of sanskaras as unnecessary lead you to sinking in the evils of the sansara. A manushya is influenced by wrongdoers – *tadbuddhyaa paribhaavito vrajati tat saamyam* – your buddhi is overcome by theirs and you become like them. This is shown in this episode.

Books like the 'Panchatantra' and 'Hitopadesh' explain things by giving examples. In the same way, this episode explains that associating with wrong people can do great harm. A person who keeps the company of lowly people slips from an elevated level of values and falls from Purushartha. Kaikeyi – the daughter of a Raja – fell because she listened to what Manthara said.

Atah sanghah parityaajyo dushtaanaam sarvadaiva hi,

duhsangee chyavate` svaarthaadyathe`yam raajakanyakaa. 2. 83

There is a story in one Ramayana that Kaikeyi was sitting alone one day. She had immense prema for Rama and He also had great prema for her. He would sleep with His head on her lap instead of Kausalya's. Kaikeyi would feed Him lovingly with her hand. Rama spent a lot of time with Kaikeyi.

Rama came up quietly from behind and shut Kaikeyi's eyes. At once Kaikeyi said, 'Beta Rama! I recognize the touch of your hands! Now, let me open my eyes.'

'I want something from you, Mata, 'said Rama. 'I will let go only when you give Me what I want.'

'There is nothing I have, which I can't give you, Beta,' said Kaikeyi. 'I will give my prana for you if you ask! There is nobody who I love more than you.'

Ramachandra said, 'Mata, you don't know this, but I am the sakshat Narayana. I have come as a manushya to relieve the burden on the Prithivi. All of you give Me so much prema that I remain here tied by your prema. How will Ravana be killed, then? So, you have to help Me. Nobody else in this sansara can do what I want you to do; nor can I tell others this secret. If it becomes public knowledge that I am not a manushya, Ravana will say that he was killed by Narayana. The varadaan Brahmaji gave Ravana will become false. So, this has to be kept secret and you must help Me.'

'All right Beta,' said Kaikeyi. 'Tell me what I should do. I will do it.'

Ramachandra told her, 'ask for the varadaans that Rama should go to the vana for fourteen years and Bharat should be made the Raja. Mata, you will have to face bitter blame for this. I am aware of this. However, because of your prema for Me, I know you will take this blame on to yourself.'

Kaikeyi felt very dukhi, but she said, ‘let Your wish be fulfilled. No matter how much I am blamed and abused, I will do what You want, so that You can go to the vana and achieve the work of the Devtas.’

I told you of another angle of this episode. There are other stories in other books. There is a story about how Manthara kept coming and standing in the way when the four princes were playing a game with a ball, refusing to move away. Lakshmanji hit the ball hard on Mathara’s back. She fell to the ground. She was furious. ’Very well!’ she said. ‘I will take revenge for this! I cannot hurt you until I take revenge on Rama!’

You can understand it this way – the vritti for revenge is not a lofty vritti; it is a lowly vritti. However, the vritti to take blame for the sake of helping someone is an extremely lofty vritti.

Ayodhya Kanda

The Third Sarga

The varadaan to Kaikeyi.

Mahaade`va uvaacha

Tato dasharatho raajaa raamaabhyudayakaaranaat,

aadishya mantriprakriteeh saanando grihamaavishat. 3. 1

Tatraadrishtvaa priyam raajaa kime`tadati vihvalah,,

yaa puraa mandiram tasyaah pravishte` mayi shobhanaa. 3. 2

Hasanti maamupaayaati saa kim naivaadya drishyate`,

ityaatmanye`va samchintya manasaatividooyataa 3. 3

Paprachchha daaseenikaram kuto vah svaaminee shubhaa,

naayaati maam yathaapoorvam matpriyaa priyadarshanaa. 3. 4

Taa uchuh krodhabhavanam pravishtaa naiva vidmahe`,

kaaranam tatra de`va tvam gatvaa nishche`tumarhasi. 3. 5

Ityuktto bhayasantrasto raajaa tasyaa sameepagah,

upavishya shanairde`ham sprishanvai paaninaabraveet. 3. 6

Kim she`she` vasudhaaprishthe` paryankaadeen vihaaya cha,

maam tvam khe`dayase` bheeru yato maam naavabhaashase`. 3. 7

Alankaaram parityajya bhoomau malinavaasasaa,

kimartham broohi sakalam vidhaasye` tava vaanchchhitam, 3, 8

Ko vaa tavaahitam kartaa naaree vaa purushoapi vaa,

sa me` dandyashcha vadhyashcha bhavishyati na sanshayah. 3. 9

Broohi de`vi yathaa preetistadavashyam mamaagratah,

tadidaaneem saadhayishye` sudurlabhamapi kshanaat. 3. 10

Jaanaasi tvam mama svaantam priyam maam svavashe` sthitam,
tathaapi maam khe`dayase` vrithaa tava parishramah. 3. 11
Broohi kam dhaninam kuryaam daridram te` priyankaram,
dhaninam kshanamaatre`na nirdhanam cha tavaahitam. 3. 12
Broohi kam vaa vadhishyaami vadhaarho vaa vimokshyate`,
kimatra bahunoktte`na praanaandaasyaami te` priye`. 3. 13
Mama praanaatpriyataro raamo raajeevalochanah,
tasyopari shape` broohi tvaddhitam tatkaromyaham. 3. 14
Iti bruvaanam raajaanam shapantam raaghavopari,
shanairvimrijya ne`tre` saa raajaanam pratyabhaashata. 3. 15
Yadi satyapratignoasi shapatham kurushe` yadi,
yaajyaam me` safalaam kartum sheeghrame`va tvamarhasi. 3. 16
Poorvam de`vaasure` yuddhe` mayaa tvam parirakshitah,
tadaa varadvayam dattam tvayaa me` tushtache`tasaa. 3. 17
Taddvayam nyaasabhootam me` sthaapitam tvayi suvrata,
tatraike`na vare`naashu bharatam me` priyam sutam. 3. 18
E`bhih sambritasambhaarairyauvaraajye`bhishe`chaya,
apare`na vare`naashu raamo gachchhatu dandakaan. 3. 19
Munive`shadharah shreemaan jataavalkalabhooshanah,
chaturdasha samaastatra kandamoolafalaashanah. 3. 20
Punaraayaatu tasyaante` vane` vaa tishthatu svayam,
prabhaate` gachchhatu vanam raamo raajeevalochanah. 3. 21
Yadi kinchidvilambe`ta praanaanstyakshye` tavaagratah,
bhava satyapratignastvame`tade`va mama priyam. 3. 22

Shrutvaitaddaarunam vaakyam kaike`yyaa romaharshanam,

nipapaata maheepaalo vajraahata ivaachalah. 3. 23

Shanairunmeelya nayane` vimrijya parayana bhiyaa,

dusvapno vaa mayaa drishto hyathavaa chittavibhramah. 3. 24

Ityaalokya purah patneem vyaaghreemiva purah sthitam,

kimidam bhaashase` bhadre` mama praanaharam vachah. 3. 25

Raamah kamaparaadham te` kritavaankamale`kshanah,

mamaagre` raaghavagunaanvarnayasyanisham shubhaan. 3. 26

Kausalyaam maam samam pashyan shushrushaam kurute` sadaa,

iti bruvantee tvam poorvamidaaneem bhaashase`anyathaa. 3. 27

Raajyam grihaana putraaya raamastishthatu mandire`,

anugrihneeshva maam vaame` raamaannasti bhayam tava. 3. 28

'Maharaj Dashrath gave his orders to his ministers and others regarding the preparations for Rama's abhishek and entered Kaikeyi's palace full of joy.'

One opinion is that Dashrath deliberately kept the news of Rama's abhishek from Kaikeyi, and in one opinion – which is very beautiful – Dashrath thought that Kaikeyi would be overjoyed to hear this news. 'If she hears the news from someone else I will miss seeing the joy on her face,' he thought. It was with this thought that he did not send Kaikeyi a message to give her the news. It is often difficult to understand the feeling behind somebody else's action. People understand their own mana, but err in understanding others.

'Dashrath entered Kaikeyi's palace filled with anand – *saanando grihamaavishat.* He could not see Kaikeyi anywhere. "She is always here to welcome me with a smile," he thought. "Why is she not here today?" He felt disappointed. He asked Kaikeyi's dasis, "where is my beautiful patni Kaikeyi?"

“Maharaj,” they said nervously. “We don’t know anything – she just went into the kopa-bhavan. Please go there and ask her about the reason.”

Raja Dashrath felt apprehensive. He was a great Emperor but he was afraid of his patni. He went to her and began to stroke her shareer lovingly. “Why have you left your bed to lie on the floor like this?” he asked tenderly. “It pains me to see you like this. Why don’t you talk to me? Why have you taken off your ornaments and thrown them about like this? I am ready to fulfil your slightest wish. If anybody has done anything to hurt you – whether it is a stree or a purush – I will punish them. I will kill them. And if you are pleased with someone I will give them whatever you say. I will do what you want even if it is very difficult.”’

A pati who does not have the skill to cajole his patni does not get sukha.

‘Dashrathji told Kaikeyi, “you know what is in my hriday. Why are you giving dukha to me? Why are you wasting your effort? Tell me – who should I make a man a rich man or a pauper? I can make your enemy a pauper in just a minute, or make your friend fabulously wealthy. Or, if somebody is in prison, I can set him free if that is what you want.

I will place my prana at your feet if you tell me to. My Beloved, why are you dukhi? I take a shapath on Rama, the lotus-eyes, who is the dearest to me in all the world that I am prepared to do whatever benefits you.”’

Dashrath was absolutely convinced that Kaikeyi also had great prema for Rama, otherwise he would never have sworn in Rama’s name to do what she wanted.

‘Kaikeyi wiped her eyes when she heard Dashrath take Rama’s shapath. She asked, “are you satya-pratigna? Do you indeed want to keep to your pratigna to do what I want? Do you take Rama’s shapath in all earnest? If so, let my entreaty be fulfilled. I had saved your life

during the battle between the Devtas and the Daityas – surely you remember it?"'

When a person reminds you of a favour he had done to you, the weight of the favour is reduced; it remains great if he forgets the help he rendered. If you do something to benefit another you should forget about it, but you should never forget a benefit anybody did you.

'Kaikeyi went on. "You gave me two varadaans because you were pleased with me. I had asked you to keep them in trust for me; that I would ask for what I wanted when the time came. Now I am claiming the varadaans. With one varadaan I want my beloved son Bharat to be crowned Raja in place of Rama. All the things prepared for Rama's abhishek should be used for Bharat's abhishek.

With the other vara Rama should go to the Dandakaranya, staying in the garb of a Muni, with jata and valkal, for fourteen years. He should subsist on roots, berries, etc. After fourteen years are over it is his choice whether he comes back or not. If there is any delay in his leaving Ayodhya I will give up my shareer before your very eyes. Now, make your pratigna satya! That is what I want."

Dashrath's hair stood on end as he heard Kaikeyi's horrifying words. He fell unconscious as though struck by a thunderbolt. Gradually he regained consciousness and opened his eyes. His mana was filled with dread. "Have I had a bad dream, or is this a bhram of my chitta?" he wondered.

He saw Kaikeyi stand over him like a ferocious lioness. He said, "Bhadre – you are a most noble lady. Are you telling me something that will kill me? What offence has Rama committed? His behaviour is always gentle. Every day, when I come to you, you sing praises of Rama. You tell me that he has as much prema for you as he has for his mother Kausalya; that he does your seva. Why have your feelings changed suddenly? Look; take the Rajya for your son Bharat gladly. I will see to it that the same items are used for Bharat's abhishek.

However, on what grounds can I send Rama to the vana? Do me this favour – let Rama stay in Ayodhya. He will not trouble you in any way – *raamaannaasti bhayam tava* – there is no cause of fear for you from Rama."

Ityuktvaashrupareetaakshah paadayornipapaata ha,

kaike`yee pratyuvaache`dam saapi rakttaantalochanaa. 3. 29

Raaje`ndra kim tvam bhraantoasi ukttam tadbhaashase`anyathaa,

mithyaa karoshi che`tsveeyam bhaashitam narako bhave`t. 3. 30

Vanam na gachche`tyadi raamachandrah prabhaatakaale`ajinacheerayukttah,

udvandhanam vaa vishabhakshanam vaa kritvaa marishye` puratastavaaham. 3. 31

Satyapratignoahamiteeha loke` vidambase` sarvasabhaantare`shu,

raamopari tvam shapatham cha kritvaa mithyaapratigno narakam prayaahi. 3. 32

Ityukttah priyayaa deeno magno dukhaarnave` nripath,

moorchchhitah patito bhoomau visangno mritako yathaa. 3. 33

A stream of tears flowed from Dashrath's eyes. He fell at Kaikeyi's feet, but her eyes remained reddened with anger.

"Oh! You have lost your senses!" she exclaimed. "You are saying just the opposite of what you said a while back! Do you want to go back on your shapath? The result will be Narak!"'

To tell your husband that he will go to Narak is to taunt him. It means that Kaikeyi agrees with Dashrath's statement that her demand will be the cause of his death. She is threatening him with Narak if he breaks his shapath.

'"Unless Rama leaves for the vana in the morning, wearing deerskin and clothes worn by a Muni, I will kill myself in front of you – either by

hanging, or by consuming poison. You have always boasted that you are a satyavadi – you never fail to keep a promise. You have sworn by Rama, and now you want to go back on your word? Go to Narak!”’

When a manushya is overcome by anger – or when he is blinded by selfishness – the state of his mind becomes such that he doesn’t know what he is saying or what he is doing. .

‘Raja Dashrath felt wretched when he heard his beloved Kaikeyi talk like this. He fell unconscious to the floor and lay there like a corpse.’

You are all aware that time slows down in the time of dukha. If a person has to sit by a dead body at night, the night seems never-ending. But if he spend the night listening to music, he won’t know where time went before the night is over! Kaala – meaning time – is a samvid; it is a perception. It is a play of the mana. Sukha-dukha, paapa-punya, ours-others’, religious faith-absence of faith, etc are all established in the mana in the form of the samvid. They come into the mana; they are superimposed on the mana. They are not in the mana naturally. This is explained clearly in the ‘Jeevanmuktivivek’. Language, caste, group, majhab, etc are all superimpositions.

If an infant is kidnapped by a Muslim he can become a radical Islamist. He won’t know that he was born to Brahmin parents. This is also an adhyaropa – it is a superimposition on the mana. I know of many youngsters who were born in India but went abroad with their parents, returning when they were in their twenties. They did not know any Indian language. These are all superimpositions.

In the same way, the feeling that this work was done quickly, this work took a long time; this is sukha, this is dukha, etc – are all superimposed on the mana. The people who know the secrets of the mana understand this.

E`vam raatrirgataa tasya dukhaatsamvatsaropamaa,

arunodayakaale` tu bandino gaayakaa jaguh. 3. 34

Nivaaryitvaa taan sarvaankaike`yee roshamaasthitaa,
tatah prabhaatasamaye` madhyakakshamupaasthitaah. 3. 35
Braahmanah kshatriyaa vaishyaa rishayah kanyakaasthaa,
chhatram cha chaamaram divyam gajo vaajee tathaiva cha. 3. 36
Anyaashcha vaaramukhyaa yaah paurajaanapadaastathaa,
vasishthe`na yathaagnaptam tatsarvam tatra sansthitam. 3. 37
Striyo baalaashcha vriddhaashcha raatrau nidraam na le`bhire`,
kadaa drakshyaamahe` raamam peetakaushe`yavaasasam. 3. 38
Sarvaabharanasampannam kireetakatakojjvalam,
kaustubhaabharanam shyaamam kandarpashatasundaram. 3. 39
Abhishikttam samaayaatam gajaaroodham smitaananam,
shve`tachchhatradharam tatra lakshmanam lakshanaanvitam. 3. 40
Raamam kadaa vaa drakshyaamah prabhaatam vaa kadaabhave`t,
ityutsukadhiyah sarve` babhoovuh puravaasinah. 3. 41
Ne`daaneemutthito raajaa kimartham che`ti chintayan,
sumantah shanakaih praayaadyatra raajaavatishthate`. 3. 42
Vardhayan jayashabde`na pranamanshirasaa nripam,
atikhinna nripam drishtvaa kaike`yeem samprichchhta. 3. 43
De`vi kaike`yi vardhasva kim raajaa drishyate`anyathaa,
tamaaha kaike`yee raajaa raatrau nidraam na labdhavaan. 3. 44
Raama raame`ti raame`ti raamame`vaanuchintayan,
prajaagare`na vai raajaa hyasvastha iva lakshyate`,
raamamaanaaya sheeghram tvam raajaa drashtumichchhati. 3. 45
Ashrutvaa raajavachanam katham gachchhaaami bhaamini,

tachchhrutvaa mantrino vaakyam raajaa mantrinamabraveet. 3. 46
Sumantra raamam drakshyaami sheeghramaanaaya sundaram,
ityuktastvaratim gatvaa sumantro raamamandiram. 3. 47
Avaaritah pravishtoayam tvaritam raamamabraveet,
sheeghramaagachchha bhadram te` raama raajeevalochana. 3. 48
Piturge`ham mayaa saardhyam raajaa tvaam drashtumichchhati,
ityukto rathamaaruhya sambhramaattvarito yayau. 3. 49
Raamah saarathinaa saardham lakshmane`na samanvtah,
madhyakakshe` vasishthaadeen pashyanne`va tvaraanvitah. 3. 50
Pituh sameepam sangamya nanaama charanau pituh,
raamamaalingitum raajaa samutthaaya sasambramah. 3. 51
Baahu prasaarya raame`ti dukhaanmadhye` papaata ha,
haahe`ti raamastam sheeghramaallingyaanke` nyave`shayat. 3. 52
Raajaanam moorchchhitam drashtvaa chukrushuh sarvayoshitah,
kimartham rodanamiti vasishthoapi samaavishe`t. 3. 53
Raamah paprachchha kimidam raagno dukhasya kaaranam,
e`vam prichchhati raame` saa kaike`yee raamamabraveet. 3. 54
Tvame`va kaaranam hyatra raagno dukhopasheentaye`,
kinchitkaaryam tvayaa raama kartavyam nripate`rhitam. 3. 55
Kuru satyapratignastvam raajaanam satyavaadinam,
raagnaa varadvayam dattam mama santushtache`ta saa. 3. 56
Tvadadheenam tu tatsarvam vakttum tvaam lajjate` nripah,
satyapaashe`na sambaddham pitaram traatumarhasi. 3. 57
Putrashabde`na chaitaddhih narakaattraayate` pitaa,

raamastayoditam shrutvaa shoole`naabhihato yathaa. 3. 58

Vyathitah kaike`yeem praaha kim maame`vam prabhaashase`,

pitrarthe` jeevitam daasye` pibe`yam vishamulbanam. 3. 59

Seetaam tyakshye`atha kausalyaa raajyam chaapi tyajaamyaham,

anaagnaptoapi kurute` pituh kaaryam sa uttamah. 3. 60

'Morning dawned. The Bandigan – musicians who woke the Raja with eulogies – arrived at the palace. Kaikeyi stopped them angrily. As per the instructions of Guru Vasishtha, young maidens from Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vaishya families gathered in the middle chamber. The ceremonial umbrella, ceremonial fly-whisk, dancers, elephants, horses, soldiers, prominent citizens and commoners all gathered as directed by Vasishthaji.

Women, children, and elderly people had not been able to sleep at night. Everyone was excited; eager for the moment when they would get darshan of Bhagwan Ramachandra seated on an elephant, wearing a yellow stole, a crown, the Kaustubh Mani at His throat, His blue-hued shareer that was attractive beyond compare, smiling at His people as He went on His way for the abhishek. Lakshman would be with Him. The mana of the people had imagined this scene and waited for that moment.'

If such eagerness for Bhagwan's darshan comes into our hriday, that is called 'bhakti'. In the Bhagwat it is described how Akrura's mana was filled with intense eagerness for Shri Krishna's darshan. His chitta was in a sublime state when he set off from Mathura for Vrindavan. Even great bhaktas long to attain such a state of mind.

People have great eagerness for food, for social acclaim, wealth, and other worldly things. There is seldom any eagerness to obtain the Ishwara. If a manushya becomes eager to obtain the Ishwara he will get kalyan.

‘People began to wonder why Raja Dashrath had not got up and made an appearance. Sumantra was the Prime Minister. He went hesitantly into the Royal chamber, saying “Jai ho! Jai ho!” He bowed down to Raja Dashrath. Observing that the Raja looked extremely unwell, he asked Kaikeyi, “Devi Kaikeyi, may you flourish. What has happened to the Raja today?”

“He did not sleep all night,” said Kaikeyi. “He kept saying, ‘Rama! Rama! Rama!’ He is unwell due to lack of sleep. Please go and bring Rama here at once. The Raja wants to get Rama’s darshan.”

“How can I go until the Raja gives me the aagna?” asked Sumantra.

Raja Dashrath spoke. “Sumantra, go quickly. Bring Ramachandra. I am anxious to get the darshan of my beautiful son Ramachandra.”

Sumantra drove to Ramachandra’s palace with all speed. Nobody stopped him; he went into Ramachandra’s chamber and said, “He rajeev-lochan Rama – come quickly! Your father, the Raja, wants to see you.”

Rama went at once. He climbed onto the chariot along with Lakshman and told the charioteer to drive with all speed to the Raja’s palace. He hastened to Raja Dashrath’s chamber when they reached, not even stopping to talk to Guru Vasishtha and other elders. He went to the Raja and bowed down to him.

Raja Dashrath made an effort to get up to embrace Rama. He stretched out his arms, but collapsed. Ramachandra caught him and held him close. He sat down with His father on His lap. The father did not take Ramji on his lap; Ramji took His father on His lap!

People began to weep when they saw their beloved Raja in this state. Hearing the sound Vasishthaji came into the chamber. Rama asked, “what is the cause of My father’s dukha?” Kaikeyi replied, “you are the cause! If you want, you can remove the Raja’s dukha. You will have to do something for your father’s benefit. You are satya-pratigna! You

never fail to keep your word. It is up to you to make the Raja satyavadi. If you don't do this, the Raja will be proved to be false."

Kaikeyi told Ramachandra about the background. "Raja had given me two varas because he was pleased with me. He feels ashamed to tell you about them, but if you wish, you can fulfil the varadaans. Your father is bound by the fetters of Satya. Protect him, Beta! A putra is one who saves his father from Narak."'

There is a Narak called 'pun'. A son who saves his father from being sent there – *punnaamno narakaatraayate` iti putra. Putra shabde`na chaitaddhi narakaatraayate` pitaa* is called a putra.

'It was as though a spear had pierced Ramachandra's hriday. "I am the cause of My father's acute dukha? Why do people doubt that I will do anything that will benefit My father, without My having to take a shapath, or without Kaikeyi telling Me?" He thought.

'Mataji," said Ramachandra, "why do you talk to Me in this way? I can give up My prana for Pitaji's benefit, whether he gives me the aagna or not.

Ukttah karoti yah putrah sa madhyam udaahritah,

ukttoapi kurute` naiva sa putro mala uchyate`. 3. 61

Atah karomi tatsarvam yanmaamaaha pitaa mama,

satyam satyam karomye`va raamo dvirnaabhibhaashate`. 3. 62

Iti raamapratignaam saa shrutvaa vakttum prachakrame`,

raama tvadabhishe`kaartham sambhaarah sambritaashcha ye`. 3. 63

Taire`va bharatoavashyamabhishe`chyah priyo mama,

apare`na vare`naashu cheeeravaasa jataadharah. 3. 64

Vanam prayaahi sheeghram tvamadyaiva pituraagnayaa,

chaturdasha samaastatra vasa munyatrabhojanah. 3. 65

E`tade`va pituste`adya kaaryam tvam kartumarhasi,

raajaa tu lajjate` vakttum tvaame`vam raghunandana. 3. 66

Shreeraama uvaacha

Bharatasyaiva raajyam syaadaham gachchhaami dandakaan,

kintu raajaa na vaktteeha maam na jaane`atra kaaranam. 3. 67

Shrutvaitadraamavachanam drishtvaa raamam purah sthitam,

praaha raajaa dasharatho dukhito dukhitam vachah. 3. 68

Streejitam bhraantahridayamunmaargaparivartinam,

nigrihya maam grihaane`dam raajyam paapam na tadbhave`t. 3. 69

E`vam che`danritam naiva maam sprishe`draghunandana,

ityuktvaa dukhasantapto vilalaapa nripastadaa. 3. 70

Haa raama haa jagannaatha haa mama praanavallabha,

maam visrijya katham ghoram vipinam gantumarhasi. 3. 71

Iti raamam samaalingya muktakantho ruroda ha,

vimrijya nayane` raamah pituh sajalapaaninaa. 3. 72

Aashvaasayaamaasa nripam shanaih sa nayakovidah,

kimatra dukhhe`na vibho raajyam shaasatu me`anujah. 3. 73

Aham pratignaam nisteerya punaryaasyaami te` puram,

raajyaatkotigunam saukhyam mama raajanvane` satah. 3. 74

Tvatsatyapaalanam de`vakaaryam chaap bhavishyati,

kaike`yyaashcha priyo raajanvanavaaso mahaagunah. 3. 75

Idaaneem gantumichchhaami vye`tu maatushcha tajjvarah,

sambhaaraashchopahreeyantaamabhishe`kaarthamaahritaah. 3. 76

Maataram cha samaashvaasya anuneeya cha jaanakeem,

aagatya paadau vanditvaa tava yaasye` sukham vanam. 3. 77

Ityuktvaa tu parikramya maataram drashtumaayayau,

kausalyaapi hare`h poojaam kurute` raamakaaranaat. 3. 78

Homam cha kaaryayaamaasa braahmane`bhyo dadau dhanam,

dhyaayate` vishnume`kaagramanasaa maunamaasthitaa. 3. 79

A superior son is one who does his pita's work even without being told to do it. A medium son is one who does his pita's work when his pita gives the aagna. A son who doesn't do his pita's work even after being told to do it is not a putra – he is *mootra* (urine)! Therefore, I will do everything Pitaji has said I am to do. *Satyam satyam karomye`va raamo dvirnaabhibhaashate`*. I will make true every word spoken by Pitaji. Rama does not need to repeat Himself – what He says once is enough; it will be done."

When Kaikeyi heard Ramji's pratigna she told Him, "Rama, all the things that have been gathered for your abhishek should be used for the abhishek of my beloved son Bharat. This is one varadaan. The second varadaan is that you don the garb of a Muni, leave your hair piled uncombed on your head, and go to the vana today itself, as per your pita's aagna. Stay in the vana for fourteen years, subsisting on roots, berries etc. This is your pita's karya and you should do it.

The Raja feels ashamed to say this to you, that is why he is silent."

Ramachandra said, "what is so difficult in this? Bharat should be the Raja and I should go to the vana. However, why is Pitaji not saying this to Me directly? Doesn't he have faith in Me?"'

Dashrathji saw Rama standing before him. He spoke with great sorrow. He could not bring himself to tell Ramachandra openly that He should go to the vana, but this is exactly what his words indicate.

'Dashrathji said, "Rama! I am enslaved by a stree. My hriday is deluded. I have strayed from my path. Please put me into prison and accept the Rajya. You will get no paapa if you do this."'

The indication is clear that what Kaikeyi says is true.

'Then Raja Dashrath embraced Rama and began to lament. "Ha Rama! Ha Jagannath! Ha beloved of my prana! You are not worthy of leaving me and going to the vana!" Raja Dashrath embraced Rama and began to cry like a baby. Rama wiped His father's tears and comforted him. He had knowledge about the right conduct.

Ramachandra told Raja Dashrath, "Maharaj! Your courage is great. There is no cause for dukha in this. It is a matter of great happiness that My younger brother Bharat will become the Raja. I will fulfil the pratigna and come back to Ayodhya after fourteen years. I will get a million times more sukha in the vana than I would get here. Your satya will remain unblemished and the work of the Devtas will be done. Kaikeyi will also be happy... Thus, My vanavas has all benefits.

I want to leave straightaway. Let all the items for the abhishek be kept intact for Bharat. I will comfort Mataji and explain everything to Janaki, and come back in a little while. I will bow down at your feet and set off for the vana immediately."

Rama Bhagwan did Kaikeyi's parikrama. He went to Kausalya's palace. She was doing Bhagwan Narayana's puja, praying for Ramachandra's kalian – *"shreeman naaraayanah preeyataam* – may Bhagwan Narayana be pleased, and Rama benefit in every way. May Rama's glory grow!"'

In the Valmiki Ramayana it is written that Kausalya was doing havan, offering oblations into the sacred fire, to propitiate Narayana – *homam cha kaarayaamaasa braahmane`bhyo dadau dhanam* – giving daan to Brahmins. She was doing dhyana of Bhagwan Vishnu.

Kausalya did Bhagwan Vishnu's dhyana in her hriday. She meditated on a formless effulgence that was pure consciousness that was filled with pure anand.

'Bhagwan Rama came and stood before her, but she did not see Him.

Antahsthame`kam ghanachitprakaasham nirastasarvaatishayasvaroopam,

vishnum sadaanandamayam hridabje` saa bhaavayantee na dadarsha raamam. 3. 80

Ayodhya Kanda

The Fourth Sarga

Bidding farewell to Mother Kausalya

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Tatah sumitraa drishtvainam raamam raagneem sasambhramaa,
kausalyaam bodhayaamaasa raamoayam samupasthitah. 4. 1
Shrutvaiva raamanaamaishaa bahirdrishtipravaahitaa,
raamam drishtvaa vishaalaakshamaalingyanke` nyave`shayat.. 4. 2
Moordhanyavaghraaya pasparsha gaatram nalotpalachchhavi,
bhunkshva putre`ti cha praaha mishtamantram kshudhaarditah. 4. 3
Raamah praaha na me` maatarbhojanaavasarah kritah,
dandakaagamane` sheeghram mama kaaloadya nishchitah. 4. 4
Kaike`yivaradaane`na satyasandhah pitaa mama,
bharataaya dadau raajyam mamaapyaaranyamuttamam. 4. 5
Chaturdashau samaastatra hyushitvaa munive`shadhrik,
aagamishye` punah sheeghram na chintaam kartumarhasi. 4. 6
Tatchchhrutvaa sahasodvignaa moorchchhitaa punaruttitaa,
aaha raamam sudukhaataam dukhasaagarasamplutaa. 4. 7
Yadi raama vanam satyam yaasi che`nnaya maamapi,
tvadviheenaa kshanaardham vaa jeevitam dhaaraye` katham. 4. 8
Yathaa gaurbaalakam vatsam tyaktvaa nishthe`nna kutrachit,
tathaiva tvaam na shaknomi tyaktum praanaatpriyam sutam. 4. 9
Bharataaya prasannashche`draajyam raajaa prayachchhatu,
kimartham vanavaasaaya tvaamaagnaapayati priyam. 4. 10

Kaike`yyaa varado raajaa sarvasvam vaa prayachchhatu,

tvayaa kimaparaaddham hi kaike`yyaa vaa nripasya vaa. 4. 11

Pitaa gururyathaa raama tavaahamadhikaa tatah,

pitraaaagnapto vanam gantum vaaraye`yamaham sutam. 4. 12

Yadi gachchhasi madvaakyamullanghya nripavaakyatah,

tadaa praanaanparityajya gachchhaami yamasaadanam. 4. 13

'Sumitraji saw that Kausalyaji's eyes were shut; that she was in a state of meditation. She gave her a gentle shake to bring her to outer consciousness – *raamoayam samupsthitah* – "Rama is here," she said. Kausalyaji's dhyana was deep. She awoke at Sumitraji's words. Her eyes opened when she heard the name of Rama.'

Taking the name of Rama in the outer consciousness is superior to doing Rama's dhyana internally.

'Kausalya embraced Ramachandra whose eyes were large and beautiful. She made Him sit on her lap, and smelled His head to bless Him. She touched His shareer that was the hue of a blue lotus.

"Beta," she said, "eat something – here is a sweetmeat. You are hungry."

Rama said, "Mata, today is not the day for Me to eat. I have to go to the Dandakaranya in a little while. It has been decided that I am to go today, at once. Pitaji has given Kaikeyi the varadaan that Bharat will be made the Raja and I will go to the vana for fourteen years, living in the garb of a Muni, living like a Muni. I will do the needful and come back to you as soon as I can. You are not to worry about Me."

Kausalya was shocked to hear Rama's words. She nearly fainted, but she collected herself and began to talk to Ramachandra with deep distress. "He Rama! If You are indeed to go to the vana, take me with You. How will I stay alive without You? Just as a cow cannot bear to be separated from her calf, I cannot stay without You. You are dearer to

me than my prana. If Raja-Maharaj is pleased with Kaikeyi and gives her the varadaan that Bharat will be crowed Raja, I have no objection to it. Let him give Bharat the whole Kingdom; but why is he giving You the aagna to go to the vana? This is something that baffles me. The Raja has the power to give Kaikeyi any vara he wants. Why should I have any objection? He can give what is his to anyone he wants. But, what wrong have You done to Kaikeyi, or to Maharaj, that You should be sent to the vana?

The pita is eminently important; he is the Guru. A pita is the same as the sakshat Guru. His aagna should be obeyed. However, I am Your Mata. As per the Shastras the status of the mother is higher than that of the father. If You are going to the vana at Your Pitaji's aagna, I give You the aagna to stay here. If You obey his aagna instead of mine, I will give up my prana and surrender my shareer to Yama Raj."

Lakshmanoapi tatah shrutvaa kausalyaavachanam rushaa,

uvaacha raaghavam veekshya dahanniva jagatrayam. 4. 14

Unmattam bhraantamansam kaike`yeevashavartinam,

baddhavaa nihanmi bharatam tadbandhoonmaatulaanapi. 4. 15

Aadya pashyantu me` shaurya lokaanpradahatah puraa,

raama tvamabhishe`kaaya kuru yatnamarindama. 4. 16

Dhanushpaaniraham tatra nihanyaam vighnakaarinah,

iti bruvantam saumitrimaalingya raghunandanah. 4. 17

Shooroasi raghushaardoola mamaatyantahite` ratah,

jaanaami sarva te` satyam kintu tatsamayo na hi. 4. 18

Yadidam drishyate` sarvam raajyam de`haadhikam cha yat,

yadi satyam bhavaittatra aayaasah safalashcha te`. 4. 19

Bhogaa me`ghavitaanasthavidyulle`khe`va chanchalaah,

aayurapyagnisantaptalohasthajalavinduvat. 4. 20

Yathaa vyaalagalasthoapi bhe`ko danshaanape`kshate`,

tathaa kaalaahinaa grasto loko bhogaanashaashvataan. 4. 21

Karoti dukhe`na hi karmatantram shareerabhogaarthamaharnisham narah,

de`hastu bhinnah purushaatsameekshyate` ko vaartra bhogah purushe`na bhujyate`. 4. 22

Pitrimaatrisutabhraatridaarabandhavaadisangamah,

prapaayaamiva jantoonaam nadyaam kaashthaudhavachchalah. 4. 23

Chhaaye`va lakshmeeshchapalaa prateetaa taaruyamamboormivadadhruvam cha,

svapnopamam streemukhamaayuralpam tathaapi jantorabhimaana e`shah. 4.24

Sansritih svapnasadrishee sadaa rogaadisankulaa,

gandharvanagaraprakhyaa moodhastaamanuvartate`. 4.25

Aayushyam ksheeyate` yasmaadaadityasya gataagataih,

drishtvaanye`sham jaraamrityoo kathanchinnaiva budhyate`. 4. 26

Sa e`va divasah saiva raatriritye`va moodhadheeh,

bhogaananupatatye`va kaalave`gam na pashyati. 4. 27

Lakshmanji did not know all this. Anger flared up in him when he heard Kausalya's words – *dahanniva jagattrayam* – he looked ready to set fire to all the three worlds. Lakshmanji's anger enhances Rama's gentleness by contrast. It only rises in situations where Rama's sadgunas shine more brightly in contrast, and the banner of Ramaji's virtues and glory flies high.

“My Pitaji is enslaved by Kaikeyi,” said Lakshmanji. “I will tie Pitaji up if necessary. Let Bharat and his brother and his Mama get a glimpse of my strength and valour! I will burn everybody up! Rama! Get ready for the abhishek. I will stand there with my dhanush-baan in my hand and kill anybody who tries to prevent Your abhishek!”

Ramachandra embraced Lakshman lovingly.’

Vivek goes away when a person does something that he has been told to do by someone else. Vivek should always be awake.

‘Shri Rama told Lakshman, “you are valiant, Lakshman! You can do anything! I know that My benefit is your only concern. I know the depth of your prema for Me. However, this is not the time to do what you suggest.”

Ramachandra sat down on the floor like a Rishi in a vana, ready to give upadesh to jignasus. He told the people present, “Lakshman, had this sansara, Rajya, and shareer been Satya, your effort would have been worthwhile. The bhogas of the sansara are as fickle as the lightening that flashes among the rain clouds. The duration of a manushya’s life is like a drop of water that falls on a heated piece of iron. It sizzles for a moment and then vanishes. It is alike a frog caught in the mouth of a snake – the frog feels glad to be alive.

In the same way, this whole jagat is perturbed by the kaala-sarpa; the snake of kaala. Time is like a snake that gobbles up all beings. A frog held in a snake’s mouth still hopes for a fly to drop into its mouth for it to eat. This sansara is also trapped in the jaws of kaala, but people want bhoga that is temporary.

People endure suffering, and toil to get bhoga for the shareer. What bhoga will the shareer get? This shareer is a mass of assorted matter. Like a house, it is completely separate from the Atma. What sukha is there in having asakti for the shareer and in indulging in bhoga for its pleasure?

The association of father, mother, son, brother, wife, friend, and others is like meeting people at the village well. It is like the logs that bump into each other as they float down a river. The wealth of this world is like a shadow that grows and shrinks constantly. Youth is transient, like a ripple on the lake. The sukha of the stree is like the sukha experienced in a dream. The span of life is short. A manushya gets trapped in the sansara because of his abhiman of 'me-mine', but there is no Tattva in this."'

The fact is that vichar done in a crisis is proper vichar. If proper vichar remains steady in adverse circumstances, the person retains his balance of mind.

What is the sansara? It is like a world seen in a dream. All kinds of illnesses are attached to it. It is like the cloud formations which we imagine to be the celestial city of the Gandhravas. The sun rises every morning and sets every evening and life is reduced by a day. People say, 'my son is a year older today. He is growing.' He is not growing; his life is getting shorter day by day. It is the same for all beings.

Aadityasya gataagatairahah sanksheeyate` jeevitam vyaapaaraih bahu kaaryabhaaragurubhirkaalo na vignaayate`,

drishtvaa janmajaraavipattimaranam traasashcha notpadyate` peetvaa mohamayeem pramaadamadiraam unmattabhootam jagat.

Bhatrihari has said, 'the sun rises and sets every day. People carry such a load on their head that they don't realize that time is passing. They see the birth, old age, troubles, and death of other people without feeling afraid for themselves. The manushya drinks the wine of oversight, and loses his senses. He does not see the reality even when he sees old age and death come to other people. He does not think at all about death being inevitable. This is the most astonishing thing in the world.

In the Mahabharata, the Yaksha said:

Ahanyahani bhootaani gachchhanti yamamandiram,

she`shaah jeevitumichchhanti kimaashcharyamatah param.

What can be a greater wonder than the fact that people see other people die but still they think that they will live on?

The fact is that the Atma is nitya, shuddha, buddha, Mukta and amara. The Jeeva feels the illusion of also being undying. This is a mistake.

People feel that it is the same day and the same night, and chase bhoga. They don't see the passing of time.

Pratikshanam ksharatye`tadaayuraamaghataambuvat,

sapatnaa iva rogaudhaah shareeram praharantyaho. 4. 28

Jaraa vyaaghreeva puratastarjayantyavatishthate`,

mrityuh sahaiva yaatye`sha samayam samprateekshate`. 4. 29

De`he`ahambhaavamaapanno raajaaham lokavishrutah,

ityasminmanute` jantuh krimivinbhasmasangnite`. 4. 30

Tvagasthimaansavinmootrare`torakttaadisanyutah,

vikaaree parinaamee cha de`ha aatmaa katham vada. 4. 31

Yamaasthaaya bavaanllokam dagdhumichchhati lakshmana,

de`haabhimaaninah sarve` doshaah praadurbhavanti hi. 4. 32

De`hoahamiti yaa buddhiravidyaa saa prakeertitaa,

naaham de`hashchidaatme`ti buddhirvidye`ti bhanyate`. 4. 33

Avidyaa sansrite`rhe`turvidyaa tasya nivartitaa,

tasmaadyantrah sadaa kaaryo vidyaabhyaase` mumukshubhih,

kaamakrodhaadayastatra shatravah shatrusoodana. 4. 34

Tatraapi krodha e`vaalam mokshavighnaaya sarvadaa,

ye`naavishtah pumaanhanti pitribhraatrisuhritsakhaan. 4. 35

Krodhamoolo manastaapah krodhah sansaarabandhanam,

dharmakshayakarah krodhastasmaatkrodham parityaja. 4. 36

‘”The span of life drips away steadily like water seeping out of a cracked pot. Illness attacks the shareer like an enemy. Old age threatens like a ferocious tiger, and death is waiting for its time to come. The manushya considers his shareer to be his ‘I’ and says, ‘I am the Raja. I have great power and glory.

If birds devour this shareer it becomes their excrement. If it is buried in the ground it is eaten by worms. If it is burnt it turns into ashes. And yet people believe that this excrement, this food of worms, and theses ashes, to be their ‘I’!

This deha, made of bones, flesh, skin, excreta, urine, etc is vikari. It is subject to decay and destruction. How can it be our Atma, Lakshman? This is the reality of the shareer you consider to be your ‘I’, and want to use it to destroy people!

Whenever a manushya has the abhiman of being the deha, all kinds of doshas come into his jeevan. This abhiman is the progenitor of dukha and doshas. The buddhi – ‘I am the deha’ – is called avidya. The buddhi – ‘I am not the deha; I am the chidatma’ is called vidya.

Avidya is the cause of janma-maran in this sansara.

Vidya puts an end to this cycle. Therefore, a manushya who is a mumuksha and wants Mukti from this cycle should always practice vidya.

He Lakshman, killer of enemies! The greatest enemies are the kama, krodha, etc that stay in our mana. A shatru is one who causes suffering – *shatruh saatanaaya.* That, which makes you suffer, is your shatru; nobody else makes you suffer. A person’s mana has a wish that things should happen in a particular way, and what he wants, should be done. When someone does anything that is contrary to his wish he

feels that that person is the cause of his suffering. Krodha, by itself, is enough to block the path to Moksha.

The meaning of this is that krodha is the greatest obstacle for a person who wants to lead a carefree life. It is all-pervading. *'krodhah kasmaat – kam sukham runaddhi'* – why is krodha called 'krodha'? It is because krodha becomes an obstacle on the path of *'k'* – meaning, sukha, Moksha.

'Karodha e`va krodha ityuchyate`' - when a manushya is overcome by krodha he disrespects even the people he should respect, like his father, brother, well-wisher, and others. All heart-burning comes from krodha.

What is the bandhan in this sansara? It is krodha. Krodha reduces Dharma. No Dharma is possible when a manushya is in a rage. Therefore, O Lakshman, *krodham parityaja* – give up your krodha.

Krodha e`sha mahaan shatrustrishnaa vaitaranee nadee,

santosho nandanavanam shaantire`va hi kaamadhuk. 4. 37

Tasmaachchhaantim bhajasvaadya shatrure`va bhave`nna te`,

de`he`ndriyamanah praanabuddhyaadibhyo vilakshanah. 4. 38

Aatmaa shuddhah svayamjyotiravikaaree niraakritih,

yaavadde`he`ndriyapraanairbhinnatvam naatmano viduh. 4. 39

Taavatsansaaradukhaudhaih peedyante` mrityusanyutaah,

tasmaattvam sarvadaa bhinnaamaatmaanam hridi bhaavaya. 4. 40

Buddhyaadibhyo bahih sarvamanuvartasva maa khidah,

bhunjanpraarabdhamakhilam sukham vaa dukhame`va vaa. 4. 41

Pravaahapatitam kaaryam kurvannappi na lipyase`,

baahye` sarvatra kartrittvamaavahannapi raaghava. 4. 42

Antahshuddhasvabhaavastvam lipyase` na cha karmabhih,

e`tanme`yoditam kritsnam hridu bhaavaya sarvadaa. 4. 43

Sansaaradukhairakhilairbaadhyase` na kadaachana,

tvamapyamba mayaaaadishtam hridi bhaavaya nityadaa. 4. 44

Samaagamam prateekshasva na dukhaih peedyase` chiram,

na sadaikatra samvaasah karmamaargaanuvartinaam. 4. 45

Yathaa pravaahapatitaplavaanaam saritaam tathaa,

chaturdashasamaasankhyaa kshanardhamiva jaayate`. 4. 46

Anumanyasva maamamba dukham santyajya dooratah,

e`vam che`tsukhasamvaaso bhavishyati vane` mama. 4. 47

Ityuktvaa dandavanmaatuh paadayorapatachchiram,

utthaapyanke` samaave`shya aasheerbhirabhyanandayat. 4. 48

Sarve` de`vaah sagandharvaa brahmavishnushivaadayah,

rakshantu tvaam sadaa yaantam tishthantam nidrayaa yutam. 4. 49

Iti prasthaapayaamaasa samaalingya punah punah,

lakshmano api tadaa raamam natvaa harshaashrugadgadah. 4. 50

Aaha raama mamaantasthtah sanshayoayam tvayaa hatah,

yaasyaami prishthato raama se`vaam kartum tadaadisha. 4. 51

Anugrihneeshva maam raama noche`tpraanaamstyajaamyaham,

tathe`ti raaghavoapyaaha lakshmanam yaahi maachiram. 4. 52

Pratasthe` taam samaadhaatum gatah seetaapatirvibhuh,

aagatam patimaalokya seetaa susmitabhaashinee. 4. 53

Svarnapaatrasalilaih paadau prakshaalya bhakttitah,

paprachchha patimalokya de`va kim se`nayaa vinaa. 4. 54

Aagatoasi gatah kutra shve`tachchhatram cha te` kutah,

vaaditraani na vaadyante` kireetaadivivarjitah. 4. 55

Saamantaraajasahitah sambhramaannaagatoasi kim,

iti sma seetayaa prishto raamah sasmitamabraveet. 4. 56

Raagnaa me` dandakaaranye` raajyam dattam shubhe`akhilam,

atastapaalanaarthaaya sheeghram yasyaami bhaamini. 4. 57

Adyaiva yaasyaami vanam tvam tu shvashroosameepagaa,

shushrooshaam kuru me` maaturna mithyaavaadino vayam. 4. 58

Iti bruvantam shreeraamam seetaa bheetaabraveedvachah,

kimartham vanaraajyam te` pitraa dattam mahaatmanaa. 4. 59

Taamaaha raamah kaike`yyai raajaa preeto varam dadau,

bharataaya dadau raajyam vanavaasam mamaanaghe`. 4. 60

Chaturdasha samaastatra vaaso me` kila yaachitah,

tayaa de`vyaa dadau raajaa satyavaadee dayaaparah. 4. 61

Atah sheeghram gamishyaami maa vighnam kuru bhaamini,

shrutvaa tadaamavacanam jaanakee preetisanyutaa. 4. 62

Ahamagre` gamishyaami vanam pashchaattvame`shyasi,

ityaaha maam vinaa gantum tava raaghava nochitam. 4. 63

Taamaaha raaghaavah preetah svapriyaam priyavaadineem,

katham vanam tvaam ne`shye`aham bahuvyaaghramrigaakulam. 4. 64

Raakshasaa ghoraroopaashcha santi maanushabhojinah,

sinhavyaaghravaraahaashcha sancharanti samantatah. 4. 65

Katvamlafalamoolaani bhojanaartham sumadhyame`,

apoopaani vyanjanaani vidyante` na kadaachana. 4. 66

Kaale` kaale` falam vaapi vidyate` kutra sundari

maargo na drishyate` kvaapi sharkaraakantakaarvitah. 4. 67

Guhaagahvarasambaadham jhilleedanshaadibhiryutam,

e`vam bahuvidham dosham vanam dandakasangnitam. 4. 68

Paadachaare`na gantavyam sheeetavaatapaadimat,

raakshasaadeenvane` drishtvaa jeevitam haasyase`achiraal. 4. 69

Tasmaadbhadre` grihe` tishtha sheeghram drakshyasi maam punah,

raamasya vachanam shrutvaa seetaa dukhasamanvitaa. 4. 70

Pratyuvaacha sfuradvaktraa kinchitkopasamanvitaa,

katham maamichchhase` tyakttum dharmapatneem pativrataam. 4. 71

Tvadananyaamadoshaam maam dharmagnoasi dayaaparah,

tvatsameepo sthitaam raama ko vaa maam gharshaye`dvane`. 4. 72

Falamoolaadikam yadyattava bhukttaavashe`shitam,

tade`vaamritatulyam me` te`na tushtaa ramaamyaham. 4. 73

Tvayaa saha charantyaa me` kushaah kaashaashcha kantakaah,

pushpaastaranatulyaa me` bhavishyanti na sanshayah. 4. 74

Aham tvaa kle`shaye` naiva bhave`yam kaaryasaadhinee,

baalye` maam veekshya kashchidvai jyotih shaastravishaaradah. 4. 75

Praaha te` vipine` vaasah patyaa saha bhavishyati,

satyavaadee dvijo bhooyaadgamishyaami tvayaa saha. 4. 76

Anyatkinchitpravakshyaami shrutvaa maam naya kaananam,

raamaayanaani bahushah shrutaani bahubhirdvijaih. 4. 77

Seetaam vinaa vanam raamo gatah kim kutrachidvada,

atastvayaa gamishyaami sarvathaa tvatsahaayinee. 4. 78

Yadi gachchhasi maam tyaktvaa praanaanstyakshyaami te`agratah,

iti tam nishchayam gnaatvaa seetaayaa raghunandanah. 4. 79

Abraveedde`vi gachchha tvam vanam sheeghram mayaa saha,

arundhatyai prayachchhaashu haaraabharanaani cha. 4. 80

Braahmane`bhyo dhanam sarvam dattvaa gachchhaamahe` vanam,

ityuktvaa lakshmane`naashu dvijaanaahooya bhakttitah. 4. 81

Dadau gavaam vrindashatam dhanaani vastraani divyaani vibhooshanaani,

kutumbavadbhyah shrutasheelavadbhayo mudaa dvije`bhyo raghuvanshake`tuh. 4. 82

Arundhatyai dadau seetaa mukhyaanyaabharanaani cha,

raamo maatuh se`vake`bhyo dadau dhanamane`kadhaa. 4. 83

Svakaantah puravaasibhyah se`vake`bhyastathaiva cha,

paurajaanapade`bhyashcha braahmane`bhyah sahasrashah. 4. 84

Lakshmanoapi sumitraam tu kausalyaayai samarpayat,

dhanushpaanih samaagatya raamasyaagre` vyavasthitah. 4. 85

Raamah seetaa lakshmanashcha jagmuh sarve` nripaalayam. 4. 86

Shreeraamah saha seetayaa nripapathe` gachchhan shanaih saanujah

pauraan jaanapadaankutoohaladrishah saanandamudveekshayan,

shyaamah kaamasahasrasundaravapuh kaantyaa disho bhaasayan

paadanyaasapavitritaakhilajagat praapaalayam tatpituh. 4. 87

Krodha is the biggest enemy, and trishna is the *vaitarnee nadee* – the river called Vaitarni that a jeevatma has to cross when it leaves its shareer and goes to the realm of Yama Raj."'

This is the definition given by Bhagwan Shri Ramachandra.

‘”The Vaitarni is very dirty. Jeevatmas float in it, sinking and surfacing. Santosh is the Nandanvan, the garden of the Devtas. Shanti is the Kamadhenu, the wish-fulfilling cow.

Lakshman, nobody in this world is your shatru, so hold on to shanti. If there is any shatru who is the biggest enemy of a manushya it is our own mana and indriyas.”’

Shankaracharya bhagavan said, *‘ke` shatravah santi? Nijendriyaani. Kaanye`va mitraani? Jitaani taani.’* Who is the shatru in our jeevan? Our indriyas are our greatest enemies when they take us to the wrong places and trap us. And, who is our greatest mitra? The indriyas are our greatest friends when they are kept restrained, and take us to good places.

This Atma is not the deha, because it is an assorted heap – *sandhaatastu paraarthatvaat* – any object made of many components joined together is not made for its own use; it is made for the use of some other. A motor car is made of several different parts put together. It is meant for others to ride on, not for the car itself. The shareer is made of bones, nerves, blood, skin, flesh etc, It is not created for its own use. The owner of the shareer uses it as a vehicle. He is separate from the shareer. The shareer is made for the use of the jeevatma.

‘”The Atma is our own Self, and no other. It is shuddha; not ashuddha. It is svayam-prakash – no other light is needed for it to be perceived. It is not vikari. It has no form. As long as the manushya fails to understand that the Atma is separate from the deha, indriyas, prana, etc, he remains dukhi because of the suffering inflicted by the sansara.

Therefore, Lakshman, understand that your deha is separate from your Atma. Understand also that the Atma is separate from the buddhi. The buddhi changes but the Atma does not change. A manushya does not have insistence for his own buddhi being correct

until he gets kusang. Association with the wrong kind of people makes a manushya obdurate. The buddhi keeps changing, and so do decisions, but the Atma remains unchanged.

Therefore, you should experience the Atma. Endure patiently whatever prarabdha brings in the flow of time, whether it is sukha or dukha. The things you do in times of adversity do not get attached to you even if you feel that you are the karta. Your essential nature is shuddha; actions cannot smear your essential nature. Lakshman! Experience all that I have told you in your hriday. Then, the dukha of the sansara will not hinder you.

Mata! Everything I told Lakshman is also meant for you. You should also fill this in your hriday. Wait for the time when we will be together again. You will not feel dukha. Look, when we all walk on our separate paths of karma, how can we always be together? We are like the logs that float down a river, bumping with each other occasionally. Fourteen years are nothing very long – the time will pass like half a moment.

Please give Me your aagna, Mata. Let go of dukha. If you send Me to the vana with your aagna, I will be sukhi; otherwise, I will go to the vana feeling dukhi, repenting all the time that I flouted your aagna. Since it is certain that I must go, give Me your aagna and make Me sukhi, Mata!"

Shri Ramachandra fell at His mother's feet, holding them for some moments. Kausalya Mata raised Him up and made Him sit on her lap. She gave Him her ashirvad. "May all the Devtas, Gandharvas, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and other powers protect You when You walk, sit, and sleep."

Kausalya Mata embraced Ramachandra repeatedly and then bid Him farewell. Lakshmanji bowed down to Rama with tears in his eyes. "Rama," he said, "you have removed all my doubts. I will go to the vana with You to do Your seva. Have compassion on me – if You don't

let me go with You I will give up my prana. I won't stay alive without You."

'Tathastu, Lakshman! Come with Me, but let there be no delay."

Sitapati Bhagwan Ramachandra went to Sitaji to tell her about the changed circumstances. Sitaji came forward in welcome with a smile on her face. Her nature was to always talk smilingly – *susmitaa bhaashinee.'*

The description of Ramachandra is – *smita poorvabhibhaashee cha* – He would be the first to speak even when He met a stranger. This was His natural behaviour. He had goodwill for all.

When a person has abhiman he waits for the other to speak first, or he waits to be introduced, or he speaks if the other person comes with folded hands and bows down to him.

'Janaki brought a gold vessel and washed Ramachandra's charan with great prema. She said, "Swami, how is it that You have come alone, with no armed escort? Where is Your ceremonial umbrella? Why is there no band, playing music? Why is there no crown on Your head? You always have many people with You; why are You alone today? Have You come in haste, in some agitation? What has happened?"

Shri Ramachandra smiled at her.'

There are some people who are gloomy and pessimistic by nature. They spread gloom wherever they go. If a person is cheerful others feel cheerful at the sight of him. If a manushya is able to smile in adverse situations it reduces the dukha of others. If he becomes dukhi and begins to weep he only spreads dukha.

'Bhagwan Ramachandra smiled. He conveyed the news in a positive manner. "Kalyani! Sita! The Raja has given Me the whole Dandakaranya to rule over. I want to go at once to look after My Rajya. I will leave today itself. You stay with your mother-in-law and do her

seva. I am not telling you any lies; I am not joking. What I say is absolutely true."

Sitaji's hriday was filled with dread when she heard this. "Why?" she asked, 'why have You been given the Rajya of the vana?"

'The Raja was very pleased with Kaikeyi. He gave her two varas. The Rajya of Ayodhya is given to Bharat, and fourteen years of vanavas to Me. Maharaj gave Kaikeyi what she asked for. He is satyavadi and compassionate."'

The way Ramachandra described His Pitaji at such a time is worth noting. *Styavaadee dayaaparah* – he is true to his word, and he is compassionate.

'"And so, My dear, please don't make any objection. I will go quickly."

Janaki felt no dukha when she heard about Rama's vanavas. She felt prema and contentment – *jaanakee preeti sanyutaa.*

'"I will walk ahead, and You walk behind me," she said. "It is not right if You go to the vana without me."

Ramachandra felt pleased with Janaki's reaction – *svapriyaam priyavaadineem* – she is His beloved patni, and her response is filled with prema. "How can I take you to the vana with Me, Janaki?" He asked. "There are lions and tigers and other dangerous animals in the vana. We have to eat wild berries and roots that are sour and bitter, and they are not always found. There is no proper path to walk on. We have to walk on sharp stones and nettles. There are large caves with huge insects and worms. We have to walk, face rain and heat and cold. You will get frightened if you see a Rakshasa. This is why it is better that you remain here, Janaki. I will come back to you very soon."'

Sitaji felt very dukhi when she heard this. When she first heard about Rama's vanavas she felt pleased, assuming she would go with Him. When she heard Him say that she should stay back her lips trembled.

It is shown here when the time is right for anger to rise in the mana of a pativrata patni.

'Sitaji felt a spurt of anger – *sfuradvakraa kinchitkopasamanvitaa.*

"I am Your Dharma-patni," said Janakiji. "A pati can leave his Dharma-patni if she is not a pativrata, but I am a pativrata Dharma-patni. Why do You want to leave me behind? I have nobody but You. There is no dosha in me. You, Yourself, are Dharmagna. You are compassionate. There is nothing in the vana that can harm me if I am with You. I will eat whatever is left after You have eaten, and that will be like amrita for me; forget about any bitter or sour taste. I can be sukhi only if I am with You. When I am with You, the sharp stones and nettles will seem like soft flowers. There is no doubt about this.

I will not trouble You in any way; I will help in making Your work a success. When I was a child a jyotish had told me that I would stay in the vana for some year with my pati. Don't let that Brahmin's prediction be proved false. It is also my responsibility to ensure that the one thing he told me should come true. Let us prove the Brahmin's word to be true; we will go to the vana together.

There is one thing more that I want to point out to You. I have listened to many different Ramayanas, from many Brahmins. In none of them is it written that Rama went to the vana without Sita. Have You heard this anywhere? If so, tell me which Ramayana says this – *kutrachidvada.* So, I will go with You and I will help You in every way. If You leave me behind and go alone to the vana, I will give up my prana in Your presence."

Seeing Sitaji's resolute insistence Ramachandra said, "Devi, get ready quickly and come with Me. Give all your necklaces to Arundhati. There is no question of taking garments and ornaments to the vana. Do daan of all the valuables you have to Brahmins, because their learning is their only livelihood."

Sitaji told Lakshman to call all the Brahmins. She did daan of hundreds of cows, and distributed her possessions, giving the most valuable to Arundhati. Rama gave various items to the people who served His mata Kausalya and His own servitors, and to the people who had come from rural areas for the abhishek.

Lakshman came with his mata Sumitra and entrusted her to Kausalya. He had his dhanush and quiver of arrows, and a long dagger, but nothing else. He came and stood before Ramachandra and said, 'I am ready. There are no preparations I have to make since I am not taking anything with me."

Rama, Lakshman and Janaki all started to walk to Dashrath's palace.'

There is a description that Rama, Lakshman and Sita walked sedately on the main road. There was no haste in them. The shanti of a manushya should never be lost.

'The people of Ayodhya and those who had come from the areas round the city watched them with interest. Rama, Lakshman and Sita also looked at them with anand – *saanandamudveekshyayan.* Shri Rama's bluish form was so beautiful that not even a hundred Kamadevs could match its lustre. There was no lessening of the brightness on His face. His effulgence radiated in all directions. His footsteps made the entire world pavitra. Bhagwan Shri Ramachandra reached the palace of His father, Raja Dashrath

Ayodhya Kanda

The Fifth Sarga

Going to the Vana.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Aayaantam naagararaa drishtvaa maarge` raamam sajaanakim,
lakshmane`na samam veekshya uchuh sarve` paraspram. 5. 1
Kaike`yyaa varadaanaadi shrutvaa dukhasamaavritaah,
bata raajaa dasharathah satyasangham priyam sutam. 5. 2
Streehe`toratyajatkaamee tasya satyaatmataa kutah,
kaike`yee vaa katham dushtaa raamam satyam priyankaram. 5. 3
Vivaasayaamaasa katham kroorakarmaatimoodhadheeh,
he` janaa naatra vastavyam gachchhaamoadyaiva kaananam. 5. 4
Yatra raamah sabhaaryashcha saanujo gantumichchhati,
pashyantu jaanakeem sarve` paadachaare`na gachchhateem. 5. 5
Pumbhih kadaachiddrishtvaa vaa jaanakee lokasundaree,
saapi paade`na gachchhantee janasanghe`shvanaavritaa. 5. 6
Raamoapi paadachaare`na gajaashvaadivivarjitah,
gachchhati drakshyatha vibhum sarvalokaika sundaram. 5. 7
Raakshasee kaike`yeenaamnee jaataa sarvavinaashinee,
raamasyaapi bhave`ddukham seetaayaah paadayaanatah. 5. 8
Balavaanvidhire`vaatra pumprayatno hi durbalah,
iti dukhaakule` vrinde` saadhoonaam munipungavah. 5. 9
Abraveedvaamade`voatha saadhoonaam sanghamadhyagah,
maanushochatha raamam vaa seetaam vaa vachmi tattvatah. 5. 10

E`sha raamah paro vishnuraadinaaraayanah smritah,

e`shaa saa jaanakee lakshmeeryogamaaye`ti vishrutaa. 5. 11

Asau she`shastamanve`ti lakshmanaakhyashcha saampratam,

e`sha maayaagunairyukttastaasaakaarabaaniva. 5. 12

E`sha e`va rajoyuktto brahmaabhridvishvabhaavanah,

sattvaavishtastathaa vishnustrijagatpratipaalakah. 5. 13

E`sha rudrastaamasoante` jagatpralayakaaranam,

e`sha matsyah puraa bhootvaa bhakttam vaivasvatam manum. 5. 14

Naavyaaroshya layasyaante` paalayaamaasa raaghavah,

samudramathane` poorvam mandare` sutalam gate`. 5. 15

Adhaarayatsvaprishthe`adrim koormaroopee raghoottamah,

maha rasaatalam yaataa pralaye` srikaroabhavat. 5. 16

Tolayaamaasa danshtraagre` taam kshoneem raghunandanah,

naarasinham vapuh kritvaa prahlaadavaradah puraa, 5. 17

Trailokyakantakam rakshah paatayaamaasa tatrakhaih,

putraraajyam hritam drishtvaa hyadityaa yaachitah puraa. 5. 18

Vaamanatvamupaagamya yaanchayaa chaaharatpunah,

dushtakshatriyabhoobhaaranivrittyai bhaargavoabhavat. 5. 19

Sa e`va jagataam naatha idaaneem raamataam gatah,

raavanaadeeni rakshaansi kotisho nihanishyati. 5. 20

Maanushe`naiva maranam tasya drishtam duraatmanah,

raagnaa dasharathe`naapi tapasaaraadhito harih. 5. 21

Putratvaakaankshayaa vishnostasaa putroabhavaddharaih,

sa e`va vishnuh shreeraamo raavanaadivadhaayahi. 5. 22

Gantaadyaiva vanam raamo lakshmane`na sahaayavaan,

e`sha seetaa hare`rmaayaa srishtisthityantakaarinee. 5. 23

Raajaa vaa kaike`yee vaapi naatra kaarananvapi,

poorve`dyurnaaradah praaha bhoobhaaraharanaaya cha. 5. 24

Raamoapyaaha svayam saakshaachchhvo gamishyaamyaham vanam,

ato raamam samuddishya chintaam tyajata baalishaah. 5. 25

Raamaraame`ti ye` nityam japanti manujaa bhuvi,

te`shaam mrityubhayaadeeni na bhavanti kadaachana. 5. 26

Kaa punastasya raamasya dukhashankaa mahaatmanah,

raamanaamnaiva mukttih syaatkalau naanye`na ke`nachit. 5. 27

Maayaamaanusharoope`na vidamba yati lokakrit,

bhakttaanaam bhajanaarthaaya raavanasya badhaaya cha. 5. 28

Raagnashchaabheeshtasiddhyartham maanusham vapuraashritah,

ityutvaa viraraamaatha vaamade`vo mahaamunih. 5. 29

Shrutvaa te`api dvijaah sarve` raamam gnaatvaa harim vibhum,

juhurhritsanshayagranthim raamame`vaanvichintayan. 5. 30

Ya idam chintaye`nnityam rahasyam raamaseetayoh,

tasya raame` dridhaa bhakttirbhave`dvignaana poorvikaa. 5. 31

Rahasyam gopaneeyam vo yooyam vai raaghavapriyaah,

ityuktvaa prayayau vipraste`api raamam param viduh. 5. 32

Tato raamah samaavishya pitrige`hamavaaritah,

saanujah seetayaa gatvaa kaike`yeemidabraveet. 5. 33

Aagataah smo vayam maatastrayaste` sammatam vanam,

gantum kritadhiyah sheeghramaagnaapayatu nah pitaa. 5. 34

Ityukttaa sahasotthaaya cheeraani pradadau svayam,

raamaaya lakshmanaayaatha seetaayai va prithak prithak. 5. 35

Raamastu vastraanyutsrijya vanyacheeraani paryadhaat,

lakshmanoapi tathaa chakre` seetaa tatra vijaanataa. 5. 36

Haste` griheetvaa raamasya lajjayaa mukhamaikshata,

raamo griheetvaa tachcheeramanshuke` paryave`shtayat. 5. 37

Tad drishtvaa ruruduh sarve` raajadaaraa samantatah,

vasishthastu tadaakarnya ruditam bhartsayan rushaah. 5. 38

Kaike`yeem praaha durvritte` raama e`va tvayaa vritah,

vanavaasaaya dushte` tvam seetaayai kim prayachchhaasi. 5. 39

Yadi raamam samatve`ti seetaa bhaktyaa pativrata,

divyaambaradharaa nityam sarvaabharanabhooshitaa. 5. 40

Ramayatvanisham raamam vanadukhanivaarinee,

raajaa dasharatho apyaaha sumantram rathamaanaya. 5. 41

Rathamaruhya gachchhantu vanam vanacharapriyaah,

ityuktvaa raamamaalokya seetaam chaiva salakshmanam. 5. 42

Dukhaannipatito bhoomau rurodaashrupariplutah,

aaruroha ratham seetaa sheeghram raamasya pashyatah. 5. 43

Raamah pradakshinam kritvaa pitaram rathamaaruhat,

lakshmanah khadangayugalam dhanustooneeyugam tathaa. 5. 44

Griheetvaa rathamaaruhya nodayaamaasa saarathim,

tishtha tishtha sumantre`ti raajaa dasharathoabraveet. 5. 45

Gachchha gachchhe`ti raame`na noditoachodayadratham,

raame` dooram gate` raajaa moorchhitah praapatadbhuvi. 5. 46

Pauraastu baalavriddhaashcha vriddhaa braahmanasattamaah,

tishthatishthe`ti raame`ti kroshanto rathamanvayuh. 5. 47

Raajaa ruditvaa suchiram maam nayantu graham prati,

kausalyaayaa raamamaaturityaaha parichaarakaan. 5. 48

Kinchitkaalam bhave`ttatra jeevanam dukhitasya me`,

ata griham pravishaiva kausalyaayaah papaata ha,

moorchchhitashcha chiraadbhuddhvaa
tooshneeme`vaavatasthivaan. 5. 50

'The people saw Sita, Rama, and Lakshman walking on the main road. They began to talk among themselves. They were filled with anguish when they heard about the varadaan given to Kaikeyi. The unanimous feeling was that Raja Dashrath had sacrificed his priya putra – who is a satya sangha – for the sake of his stree. "This is a sign of his propensity for lust, not his satya!" they declared. 'How did Kaikeyi become so wicked? It is cruel and foolish of her to send Rama to the vana; Rama, who only does what pleases everybody!"

They all felt, "this city is no longer worth staying in, my brother. Come, let us also go to the vana today with Sita, Rama and Lakshman, and stay where they stay. Just see – Janaki is walking barefoot on the road!"

Some people may have seen Janakiji before, but generally, she rarely appeared in public. "Janaki has the beauty of a Queen! She is going on foot like a commoner, without slippers! So are Rama and Lakshman! They should be going on a chariot, or seated on an elephant! Look – He, who pervades the world with His beauty, that Ramachandra is before our eyes! A Rakshasi has been born in the form of Kaikeyi – she has destroyed everybody. Even Rama would be feeling dukha at the sight of Sitaji walking on the road like this. Sita may or may not feel

dukha about this, but she is bound to feel dukha to see Ramachandra walk barefoot on the road in this manner! The Vidhata who rules everybody's destiny is all-powerful! The efforts of the manushya are feeble indeed!"

Seeing the acute distress of the Sadhus, Vamdev Muni appeared before them. He had obtained Brahmagnan when he was still in his mother's womb. All obstacles to Gnan had been removed even before he was born.

Vamdev Muni told the Sadhus, "I will tell you the actual story behind this. The fact is, you should not grieve for Sita or for Rama. Rama is Para-Vishnu. He is Adi-Narayana, and Janaki is Laxmi, His Yoga-Maya. Lakshman is the roop of the Shesha. It is the one Paramatma who, using His Maya, appears in many different forms. When He merged with Rajoguna He took the form of Brahma and created this srishti. When He accepted the predominance of Sattvaguna He became Vishnu, and sustained the world. He is Rudra when He accepts Tamoguna and destroys the world.

It is He who assumed the form of a fish and came in the Matsya Avatar to protect Vivasvat Manu sitting in a boat. At the time of the Samudra Manthan He adopted the form of a turtle. This was His Kachhap Avatar. He supported the Mandarachal parvat on His back. It was none other but He, who became a boar and came in the Varaha Avatar to save the Prithivi, and bring her up from the Rasatal, the lowest of the seven Naraks. In His Nrisingha Avatar He gave a varadaan to Prahlad, and killed Hiranyakashipu. In response to Aditi's prayer He came as Vaman Bhagwan. Then, He came as Parashuram to reduce the burden of the Prithivi. The same Swami of this Jagat has now come as Ramachandra.

Ramachandra will destroy Ravana and the other Rakshasas. That wicked man can only be killed by a manushya. This is why Bhagwan has assumed a manushya form, and come as the son of Dashrath.

Dashrath had done severe tapasya with the desire to have Bhagwan as his son.

Thus, it is the same Vishnu in the form of Rama. He is going to the vana in order to kill Ravana. Lakshman will help Him. Sitaji is His Maya, who actually does the srishti, sthiti and pralay of this world.

Look, my brothers, don't blame Raja Dashrath. Don't even blame Kaikeyi. It is a dosha of our own mana to blame others. When a manushya considers somebody to be a paapi, that person may or may not be a paapi, but the paapa in the person's mana sees the other as a paapi. The kalpana of paapa-punya is in our own mana. It has been put there by some external source. We have accepted it as a fact. In the vastu that is the adhishthana, the Sattva – the Paramartha – there is nothing to worry about."'

Kaikeyi was the daughter of the land of *kaike`ya.* There is also a word, *kaike`yee,* or *ke`kaya*, or *kaikaya*.

'"Just yesterday, Naradji came to Ramachandra and prayed to Him to remove the burden of the Prithivi. Rama Himself made the pratigna to go to the vana and kill the Rakshasas, so there is no need to worry about Rama. It is foolish to worry about the Paramatma! Even a person who does japa of Rama's name does not need to fear mrityu; then, what reason is there to think that Rama will suffer?

In the Kali Yuga a manushya gets Mukti by chanting Rama-naam. He needs no other sadhan to get Mukti. How can that Rama get dukha?"'

I had once gone to meet Pundit Ramvallabhasharanji. He lived at Janaki Ghat in Ayodhya. Shri Chakraji was with me. I asked him, 'Maharaj, it is said, "*sarayoosnaanamuktih"* – a person who takes a bath in the Saryu gets Mukti. How can that be? *"Rite` gnaanaanna mukti"* – Mukti cannot be obtained without getting Gnan. If that be the case, how can a manushya get Mukti by taking a bath in the Saryu, without him having got Brahmagnan, or by taking Rama-naam? Or getting Bhagwan's darshan?'

He explained this to me. 'Look,' he said, 'the bhava "I am baddha" is just a conviction that has been created in the mana. Where is the bandhan? Just as one belief gets settled in the mana, another bhava should be created to replace it – 'I am Mukta'. If Rama gives you a varadaan that you are Mukta, you will be Mukta. If Saryu-snan creates the belief in you that you have become Mukta after bathing in the Saryu, you will not consider yourself to be baddha. It is absolutely a belief that we are bound in this sansara. Has anybody seen the bandhan?

Who are people bound to – a stree, a purush, the karmas that give punarjanma or Narak? Who is anybody actually bound by? The mana has developed a firm conviction that is imagined. It is a bhram. It is not created by prama.

If a manushya gets the prama, "I am nitya, shuddha, buddha and Mukta", this prama is so powerful that it can make the person Mukta. Therefore, utter the name of Rama once – *raaaaaaama* – you will be released! In fact, it is described that if a manushya utters the verb *"charaamah, maraamah, haraama"* at the time of death he will get Mukti, because these word include the name of Rama!'

There is an episode in the Shiva Purana that there was a dacoit. He would call out, '*aahara*', or '*prahara*' – meaning, 'loot him, kill him'. He went into a coma at the time of his death, but he uttered these words even in an unconscious state. Shankarji's emissaries arrived to take him to Shivaloka, because these words included Shivaji's name – 'Hara, Hara'.

This is the greatness of the impact of Bhagwan's name.

Somebody may question as to how a false impression of Bhagwan's name has so much power. I ask a counter-question. The naam-abhasa is an abhasa; that is true, but is the bandhan real? Had the bandhan been real, the real naam would be needed to severe it. The fact is that the bandhan is also an abhasa and so it has to be broken by the naam-

abhasa. A real bandhan needs a real name, but a false impression of Bhagwan's name is enough to break a false bandhan.

This is how Vedanta is established.

'"Shri Rama confuses people using His Maya. Let bhaktas do bhajan, let Ravana be killed. And let the desire of the Rajya and Raja come true. This is why He has come as a manushya." After saying this, Vamdev became silent.

All the Brahmins reacted simultaneously. "Oh – Rama is the sakshat Bhagwan!" Their doubts and worries vanished instantly.

This is the secret truth about Rama-Sita. Whoever mediates on it every day will get bhakti for Rama, which is filled with vignan. Bhakti is attained unknowingly, in darkness. Just as a person sees somebody walking, and instinctively feels that the person is a great siddha. However, the man knows nothing about chamatkaras and siddhis or Bhagwan's anugraha. This is how people get trapped in this sansara.

If you grasp this Rama-Rahasya properly, you will get the vignan of the Rama-Tattva. The bhakti that comes after a person gets vignan is enduring. It is the real bhakti. The bhakti that comes without having knowledge is because of vishvas-shraddha.

"This Rama-rahasya I have told you should be kept hidden. You are all dear to Rama. It will not help Rama if you disclose this rahasya to others." Vamdevji went away after saying this. The Brahmins who had heard his words understood that Rama was the Param-Brahman.

After this, who was to stop Rama, Lakshman and Sita from going to Raja Dashrath's palace? They went to Kaikeyi's chamber. "Mata," said Rama, "we have come to you, ready to go to the vana as per your wish. Now, let Pitaji give us the aagna to go as quickly as possible."

Kaikeyi quickly brought cheer-vastra, the garb worn by Sadhus. She gave one to each of them. Rama changed into the garments made of the bark of a tree, but Sitaji did not know how they were to be worn.

She held the garments in her hand, embarrassed, and looked helplessly at Ramachandra. He took the garments from her hand and put them on her, over the clothes she was wearing. The Queens and other ladies in the room began to weep to see this. The sound of their crying reached the people waiting in the hall outside.

Guru Vasishtha came in to see the cause of the lamenting. He understood the matter at a glance and rebuked Kaikeyi. “Oh, you dushcharinee! You asked for vanavas for Rama, not for Sita! Why are you giving her these garments? If Sita goes to the vana with Rama, it is because of her prema and pativrata; why should she wear cheer-valkal? Sita will go wearing her normal clothes and ornaments. She will stay with Rama and give Him sukha, and remove the dukha of vanavas.”

All present were quiet when they heard Vasishthji’s words. Raja Dashrath told Sumantra, “Sumantra, bring the chariot. Let the three go in the chariot, and do what is of benefit for the people who live in the vana.” Tears flowed from his eyes. He saw Rama, Sita and Lakshman ready to set off and fell in a faint.’

It is the etiquette to keep the father and mother on the right.

‘Rama kept Dashrathji to His right as He climbed on to the chariot, followed by Sitaji. Lakshman climbed up, carrying two daggers, two bows and two quivers full of arrows. He knew they would be needed in the vana.

Ramachandra told Sumantra to start. Dashrathji kept saying, “stop! stop!” but Ramachandra told Sumantra to go quickly and not prolong Dashrath’s agony. When the chariot went out of sight Dashrath again became unconscious. People ran behind the chariot – Brahmins, the young and the old, and others – calling out to Sumantra to stop.

Raja Dashrath recovered consciousness and started to weep bitterly. After a long time he told his servants to take him to Kausalya’s palace. “I want to go to Rama’s Mata,” he said. ‘I will hold on to my jeevan a

little longer there. I cannot live without Rama." When he was taken there he collapsed again. He became silent after he regained consciousness.

Ramachandra Bhagwan's chariot reached the bank of the Tamasa river. They spent the rest of the day there, peacefully. They drank the water, but did not eat anything.

Raamastu tamasaateeram gatvaa tatraavasatsukhee,

jalam praashya niraahaaro vrikshamoole`asvapadvibhuh. 5. 51

Seetayaa saha dharmaatmaa dhanushpaanistu lakshmanah,

paalayaamaasa dharmagnah sumantre`na samanvitah. 5. 52

Pauraah sarve` samaagatya sthitaastsyaavidooratah,

shakttaa raamam puram ne`tum noche`drachchhaamahe` vanam. 5. 53

All three fasted that day. Shri Ramachandra and Sitaji slept at the foot of a large tree. Lakshmanji kept guard with his dhanush-baan in his hands, with Sumantraji beside him.

The people who had followed the chariot all reached there a little later. They sat at some distance, determined to either take Rama back to Ayodhya or to go with Him to the vana.

Iti nishchayaamaagnaaya te`sham raamoativismitah,

naaham gachchhaami nagarame`te` vai kle`shabhaaginah. 5. 54

Rama was amazed at this decision of the people of Ayodhya, and the great prema they had for Him. He thought, "I will not go into the city; these people will suffer if they follow Me into the vana." He made a quick decision, and told Sumantra, "let us leave quietly while these people are asleep."'

Goswamiji has written up to this point. He has not written the next part.

Bhavishyanteeti nishchitya sumantramidamabraveet,

idaaneeme`va gachchhaamah sumantra rathamaanaya. 5. 55

Ityaagnaptah sumantroapi ratham vaahairayojayat,

aarihya raamah seetaa cha lakshmanoapi yuyurdrutam.5. 56

Ayodhyaabhimukham gatvaa kinchid dooram tato yayuh,

te`api raamamadrishtvaiva praatarutthaaya dukhitaah. 5. 57

'"Sumantra, bring the ratha. Let us leave at once," said Ramachandra. Rama, Sita and Lakshman drove towards Ayodhya for a little distance and then Sumantra turned the chariot is such a way that it could not be traced.

When the people awoke at dawn they realized that Rama, Sita and Lakshman had driven away while they slept. They followed the marks of the chariot wheels until the marks disappeared. They were left with no option but to return to Ayodhya, and do dhyana of Shri Rama.

Rathane`migatam maargam  pashyantaste` puram yayuh,

hridi raamam saseetam te` dhyaayantastasthuranvaham. 5. 58

They went back home and remained immersed in Rama's dhyana until He came back to Ayodhya.

Sumantroapi ratham sheeghram nodayaamaasa saadaram,

sfeetaanjanapadaanpashyan raamah seetaasamanvitah. 5. 59

Gangaateeram samaagachchhchchhringave`raavidooratah,

gangaam drishtvaa namaskritya snaatvaa saanandamaanasah. 5. 60

Shinshapaavrikshamoole` sa nishasaada raghoottamah,

tato guhau janaih shrutvaa raamaagamamahotsavam. 5. 61

Sakhaayam svaaminam drashtum harshaattoonam samaapatat,

falaani madhupushpaadi griheetvaa bhakttisanyutah. 5. 62

Sumantra drove on respectfully. They passed villages and lush fields where people were working. The people seemed happy and prosperous. They came to Shringaverpur, a flourishing city beside the Gangaji. Shri Ramachandra Bhagwan bowed His head at the sight of Gangaji. They all took a bath in the pure waters with anand; then they sat under an ashok tree, which also called the shishapa tree.

Raja Guha of Shringaverpur heard of their coming. He came to welcome them, bringing fruits, honey, nuts, flowers etc. He did dandavat pranam with great prema. Ramachandra at once raised him up and embraced him affectionately, without any thought of caste etc.

Raamasyaagre` vivikshipya dandavatpraapatadbhuvi,

guhamutthaapya tam toornam raaghavah parishasvaje`. 5. 63

Samprishtakushalo raamam guhah praanjalirabraveet,

dhanyoahamadya me` janma naishaadam lokapaavana. 5. 64

Babhoova paramaanandah sprishtvaa te`angam raghoottama,

naishaadaraajyame`tatte` kinkarasya raghoottama. 5. 65

Tvadadheenam vasannatra paalayaasmaan raghoodvaha,

aagachha yaamo nagaram paavanam kuru me` griham. 5. 66

Grihaana falamoolaani tvadartham sanchitaani me`,

anugrihneeshva bhagavan daasaste`aham surottama. 5. 67

Raamastamaaha supreeto vachanam shrunu me` sakhe`,

na ve`kshyaami griham graamam nava varshaani pancha cha. 5. 68

Dattamanye`na no bhunje` falamoolaadi kinchana,

raajyam mamaitatte` sarvam tvam sakhaa me`ativallabhah. 5. 69

Vataksheeram samaanaayya jataamukutamaadaraat,

babandha lakshmane`naatha sahito raghunandanah. 5. 70

Jalamaatram tu sampraashya seetayaa saha raaghavah,

aastritam kushaparnaadaih shayanam lakshmane`na hi. 5. 71

Uvaasa tatra nagarapraasaadaagre` yathaa puraa,

sushvaapa tatra vaide`hyaa paryanka iva sanskrite`. 5. 72

Tatoavidoore` parigrihya chaapam sabaanatooneeradhanuh sa lakshmanah,

raraksha raamam parito vipashyan guhe`na saardham sasharaasane`na. 5. 73

Ramachandra recognizes prema. He knows who is His bhakta. He raised Raja Guha up and embraced him. Shri Rama asked about his welfare and the welfare of his people.

“Today I am blessed, Maharaj!” said Guha. “My birth as a Nishad has become pavan, because I have been given a touch of Your chest, Your hriday! This Nishadraj is Yours, Maharaj! I am Your servant. I will rule this Kingdom under Your command.

Please come into the city. Come to my house and make it pavan. Please accept these fruits, flowers etc – I have brought them with great prema. Please grant me Your favour – I am Your dasa.”

Bhagwan Ramachandra felt very pleased. He told Guha, “I will not go into any city or house for fourteen years, nor eat fruits etc brought to Me. Your Rajya is Mine, and you are My very dear friend.”

Ramachandra asked Guha to get Him some sap of a banyan tree. He applied this to His and Lakshman’s hair, and piled up the hair on top of the head. That night, He slept on a grass mat beside Sita. They drank water, but did not eat anything. Lakshman and Guha spent the night keeping watch.

Bhagwan Rama slept on the grass mat just as He slept in a high bed in Ayodhya – *nagarapraasaadaagre*. Lakshman stood at some distance

with his dhanush on the ready and a quiver full of arrows. He stood guard along with Guha while Shri Rama-Sita slept.

Ayodhya Kanda

The Sixth Sarga.

Crossing the Ganga, meeting Bharadwaj and Valmiki.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Suptam raamam samaalokya guhah soashrupariplutah,

lakshmanam praaha vinayaad bhraatah pashyasi raaghavam. 6. 1

Shayaanaam kushapatraudhasanstare` seetayaa saha,

yah she`te` svarnaparyanke` svaasteerne` bhavanottame`. 6. 2

Kaikey`ee samadukhasya kaaranam vidhinaa kritaa,

mantharaabuddhimaasthaaya kaike`yee paapamaacharat. 6. 3

Tachchhrutvaa lakshmanah praaha sakhe` shrunu vacho mama,

kah kasya he`turdukhasya kashcha he`tuh sukhasya vaa. 6. 4

Svapoorvaarjitakarmaiva kaaranam sukhadukhayoh. 6. 5

Sukhasya dukhasya na koapi daataa paro dadaateeti kubuddhire`shaa,

aham karomeeti vrithaabhimaanah svakarmasootragrathito hi lokah. 6. 6

Suhrinmitraaryudaaseeenadve`shyamadhyasthbaandhavaah,

svayame`vaacharankarma tathaa tatra vibhaavyate`. 6. 7

Sukham vaa yadi vaa dukham svakarmavashago narah,

yadyadyathaagatam tattad bhuktvaa svasthamanaa bhave`t. 6. 8

Na me` bhogaagame` vaanchhaa na me` bhogavivarjane`,

aagachchhatvatha maagachchhatvabhogavashago bhave`t. 6. 9

Yasmin de`she` cha kaale` cha yasmaadvaa ye`na ke`na vaa,

kritam shubhaashubham karma bhojyam tattatra naanyathaa. 6. 10

Alam harshavishaadaabhyaam shubhaashubhafalodaye`,

vidhaataa vihitam yadyattadalankhyam suraasuraih. 6. 11

Sarvadaa sukhadukhaabhyaam narah pratyavarudhyate`,

shareeram punyapaapaabhyaamutpannam sukhadukhavat. 6. 12

'Tears flowed from Guha's eyes at the sight of Shri Ramachandra and Janaki sleeping on the ground, on a grass mat. With great humility he told Lakshman, "just see! Shri Rama is sleeping on a grass mat with Sita. It is the same Rama who sleeps on a high bed of gold on a soft mattress. Kaikeyi has given great dukha to Rama. The Vidhata decreeded this. Kaikeyi did paapa by taking the ashray of Manthara's buddhi!"

Lakshman said, "my friend," – whoever Rama embraces is Lakshman's friend! – "listen to me."'

The fact is that a manushya says only what he perceives. Not everybody has a grasp of the Satya,

What is the cause of rain?

Science says that smoke, heat, water, and air merge in the akash, clouds are formed, and rain falls.

Another person says, 'no; Indra Devta is the Raja of the clouds. Rain falls at his command.'

'Thousands of such Indras keep wandering here and there. The cause of rain is the antaryami Ishwara,' says somebody else.

The perceived cause of rain keeps changing with different viewpoints. Belief is a Devta in the adhidaivik drishti, which is based on vishvas. It is a conviction of faith. The opinion that the antaryami Ishwara causes rain is the drishti that touches poornata.

‘Lakshman told Guharaj, “listen to me, my friend. Nobody is the cause of another person’s sukha-dukha. The mana of a manushya is developed by the karmas he does, and the kalpana of sukha-dukha arises in the mana. Sukha and dukha are not external, created by a bolt of lightening that falls. A kalpana of sukha or dukha arises in the mana. It depends on the substance the mana is made of. If the mana is weak, sukha-dukha rise over things that are of no consequence, but they don’t rise easily in a mana that is strong.

The state of the mana develops according to the karmas a manushya does. Therefore, there is nobody else who gives sukha or dukha to anybody; it is a defective buddhi to think that sukha-dukha is given by some other. It is abhiman to think, ‘I am the karta’, and this abhiman is absolutely false.

This srishti is held together by the twine of our own karmas. The state of the mana is like a bird tethered to a stand. It flutters its wings, trying to fly off, get tired with the futile effort, and then settles down on its perch. The mana, too, cannot go anywhere; nor does anything come into it.”’

When a person thinks of Calcutta and says that his mana went to Calcutta, it is useless talk. Neither does the mana go anywhere, not does Calcutta come into it. Both stay in their own place. An imagined feeling comes into the mana. The swarup of Calcutta in the mana is the same as the swarup of sukha-dukha in it.

This person is my well-wisher, this is my friend, this is my enemy, this person is indifferent to me, this person is to be abhorred – all these are perceptions. The fact is that a manushya does karmas, and his mana is developed according to his karmas. All his perceptions are due to his mana. A person moulds his mana by the things he does, cultivating a vritti of either sukha or dukha for the things that happen. Thus, a manushya should face whatever happens with a healthy state of mind.

I have no desire to get, or push away any bhoga that comes. I am not dependent on bhoga. Bhoga may come, or not, it makes no difference to me.Their coming or not coming or going does not make me sukhi or dukhi. Any karma that is done – at whichever place, whatever time, with whichever purpose, through whichever person, whether shubha or ashubha – comes in the form of either sukha or dukha. The manushya gets the bhoga of sukha-dukha that comes into the mana.

Therefore, a manushya should neither feel elation nor dejection. Shubha comes into the jeevan and so does ashubha. Nobody can overrule the ruling of the Vidhata. Sukha and dukha always appear before us.

This shareer is created with a combination of paapa and punya. Dukha comes after sukha. What happens when sukha ends? Sukha will be there when dukha ends.

And, will there be an end to both dukha and sukha, or are they anant, like the Paramatma? No; sukha will come and it will go; and so will dukha. Neither sukha nor dukha will last.

Sukhasyaananantaram dukham dukhasyaanantaram sukham,

dvayame`taddhi jantoonaamlanghyam dinaraatrivat. 6. 13

Sukhamadhye` sthitam dukham dukhamadhye` sthitam sukham,

dvayamanyanyontasanyukttam prochyate` jalapankavat. 6. 14

Sukha and dukha follow each other turn by turn, like day and night. The sukha-akara vritti comes in the same way. Sukha doesn't come into the jeevan of a manushya; all the nimittas are false. It is the mana that imagines different causes to be the cause to be the giver of sukha or dukha. When the mana wants to laugh or weep, he holds people responsible for it. It is our mana that imagines a person to be a friend or an enemy.

Dukha exists within sukha. When you feel that you are getting sukha from somebody, the sukha is external. Dukha gathers internally. And, when you feel that somebody is the cause of your dukha, tolerance and endurance are being built in your mana; sukha is being created. Sukha exists in dukha and dukha exists in sukha. The two are always mixed, like mud and water. Water is present in slush and so is mud. In the same way, sukha and dukha stay together. It is the duty of a manushya to patiently endure whatever happens, whether it is pleasant or unpleasant.

It is a fact that people who seem to be dukhi are mostly people who want everything to happen the way they want. When that does not happen they become unhappy and angry. An angry person means a person who is ruled by his mana. A person who is ruled by his Guru does not get angry easily. This is why a wise and learned manushya remains calm even in adverse situations. He does not become overjoyed with good fortune, or devastated by misfortune. He knows that it is a play of Maya, and the situation will not endure. It is like a magic show where things appear and disappear.

What is happening in the world these days? Which friend always stays with us? Which enemy gives us no trouble all lifelong? Things change; a friend becomes an enemy and an enemy becomes a friend. This srishti keeps turning. It neither slumbers peacefully, nor does it remain unchanged.

Tasmaadddhairye`na vidvaansa ishtaanishtopapattishu,

na hrishyanti na muhyanti sarvam maaye`ti bhaavanaat. 6. 15

Guhalakshmanayore`vam bhaashatorvimalam nabhah,

babhoova raamah salilam sprishtvaa praatah samaahitah. 6. 16

Uvaacha sheeghram sudridhaam naavamaanaya me` sakhe`,

shrutvaa raamasya vachanam nishaadaadhipatirguhah. 6. 17

‘”Know for sure that everything is Maya,” said Lakshman.’

This talk between Lakshman and Guha was unsullied by worldly viewpoints.

‘The akash lightened. Ramachandra Bhagwan got up. He touched water, washed His face, hands and feet, drank a little water and then sat in dhyana. He did chintan of His swarup. Then He told Guha to bring a boat. Guha went and quickly brought the best boat he had.

Svayame`va dadhaam naavamaaninaaya sulakshanaam,

svaaminnaaruhyataam naukaam seetayaa lakshmane`va cha. 6. 18

Vaahaye` gnaatibhih saardhamahame`va samaahitah,

tathe`ti raaghavah seetaamaaropya shubhalakshanaam. 6. 19

The Raja of the Nishad tribe of boatmen did not order any of his men; he rowed his best boat and brought it to the bank of the Gangaji in Rama’s service. He said, “Swami! Please sit on the boat with Sita and Lakshman. My brother and associates will help to row us all across the river carefully.”

Shri Ramachandra sat in the beautiful boat.’
How did He sit?

Guhasya hastaavaalambya svayam chaarohadachyutah,

aayudhaadeen samaaropya lakshmanoapyaruroha cha. 6. 20

Grihastaatvaahayaamaasa gnaatibhih sahitah svayam,

gangaamadhye` gataam gangaam praarthayaamaasa jaanakee. 6. 21

De`vi gange` namastubhyam nivrittaa vanavaasataah,

raame`na sahitaahamtvaam lakshmane`na cha poojaye`. 6. 22

Ityuktvaa parakoolam tau shanairutteerya jagmatuh. 6. 23

Guhoapi raaghavam praaha gamishyaami tvayaa saha,

anugnaam de`hi raaje`ndra noche`tpraanaanstyajaamyaham. 6. 24

Shrutvaanaishaadivachanam shreeraamastamathaabraveet,

chaturdasham samaah sthitvaa dandake` punarapyaham. 6. 25

'Guha held out both hands to help Ramachandra get into the boat.'

When I was a child we used to get into a boat to go across to close by villages. Whenever the ground was slippery the boatman would pick me up and carry me to the boat, holding me close to his chest. When there was no slush he held my hand to steady me.

'When the boat reached midstream Janakiji prayed to Gangaji. "Ma Ganga! I bow down to you. When I come back after fourteen years, along with Rama and Lakshman, I will do your puja."

Janakiji fulfilled her promise.'

This episode is given in great detail in the Valmiki Ramayana. Here, it is given in a single shloka, because the 'Adhyatma Ramayana' gives the upadesh of adhyatma; it does not focus on the charitra.

'The boat reached the opposite bank and they got off, on to the ground. Guha said, "Prabhu, I will go with You. Please grant me Your permission. If You don't let me go with You I will give up my prana!"

Hearing NIshadraj's fervent plea Shri Ramachandra said, "I will come back this way after staying in the van for fourteen years. I will meet you then. I will go to Ayodhya and take you with Me."

Aayaasyamyuditam satyam naasatyam raamabhaashitam,

ityuktvaalinggya tam bhakttam samaashvasya punah punah. 6. 26

Nivartayaamaasa guham soapi krichchhraadyayau graham. 6. 27

Tato raamastu vaide`hyaa lakshmane`na samanvitah. 6. 28

Bharadvaajaashramapadam gatvaa bahirupasthitah,

tatraikam batukam drishtvaa raamah praaha cha te` balo. 6. 29

Raamo dasharathih seetaalakshmanaabhyaam samanvitah,

aaste` bahirvanasye`ti hyuchyataam munisannidhau. 6. 30

Tachchhrutvaa sahasaa gatvaa paadayoh patito mune`h,

svaamin raamah samaagatya vanaad bahiravasthitah. 6. 31

Sabhaaryah saanujah shreemaanaaha maam de`vasannibhah,

bharadvaajaaya munaye` gnaapayasva yathochitam. 6. 32

Tachchhrutvaa sahasotthaaya bharadvaajo muneeshvarah,

griheetaarghyam cha paadyam cha raamaseepyamaayayau. 6. 33

Drishtvaa raamam yathaanyaayam poojayitvaa salakshmanam,

aaha me` parnashaalaam bho raama raajeevalochana. 6. 34

Aagachchha paadarajasaa puneehi raghunandana,

ityuktvotajamaaneeya seetayaa saha raaghavam. 6. 35

Bhaktyaa punah poojayitvaa chakaaraatitthyamuttamam,

adyaaham tapasah paaram gatoasi tava sangamaat. 6. 36

Gnaatam raama tavodantam bhootam chaagaamikam cha yat,

jaanaami tvaam paraatmaanam maayayaa kaaryamaanusham. 6. 37

Yadarthamavateernoasi praarthito brahmanaa puraa,

yadartham vanavaasaste` yatkarishyasi vai purah. 6. 38

What Rama says once is always done. Rama embraced Guha and consoled him. Nishadraj Guha went back with a heavy heart.

Shri Ramachandra, Sita and Lakshman went to the Ashram of Bharadwaj Muni. They stood at the entrance.'

To go brashly into anybody's house, even if it is an Ashram, is not proper. There is an etiquette that should be followed even when you go to the Ashram of a Mahatma.

'Ramachandra waited till He saw a young Brahmachari pass by. "Please tell Bharadwajji that Rama, Sita and Lakshman are waiting at the gate for permission to come in."

When Bharadwajji heard this, he came out at once to greet them. He brought water and washed the hands and feet of his revered visitors. "Sakshat Bhagwan has come!" he thought. He did their darshan and did puja of Rama, Sita and Lakshman. Then he said, 'Maharaj, please come to my hut. Make this hut pavitra by the touch of Your charan-kamal." He brought them in with great prema and did their puja again and again, with great bhakti and prema. He spared no effort in offering them every comfort. He said, "today I have got the fruit of my tapasya – I have got Your darshan!"'

If somebody is standing before you and a bhagavad-bhava arises in your mana, that this is sakshat Bhagwan, it is a great good fortune.

We go to the Mandir. We see the murti, or we talk to someone, saying, 'Bhagwan, Bhagwan', but we don't have a complete bhagavad-buddhi. If a person gets the feeling that the person before him is indeed Bhagwan Himself that is the fruit of his tapasya.

'Bharadwajji said, "I know what has happened with You, by the fruit of my tapasya. I know the past, about how You took an Avatar, and I also know about the future. I know what You want to do. I know that You are sakshat Paramatma, and have assumed the form of a manushya for a specific purpose. I know that Brahma prayed to You, and the reason of Your coming to the van. I know this because of my Gnan-drishti which I have received by doing Your upasana.

Jaanaami gnaanadrishtyaaham jaatayaa tvadupaasanaat,

itah param tvaam kim vakshye` kritaarthoaham raghoottama. 6. 39

Yastvaam pashyaami kaakutstham purusham prakrite`h param,

raamastamabhivaadyaaha seetaalakshansanyuktah. 6. 40

Anugraahyaastvayaa brahmanvayam kshatriyabaandhavaah,

iti sambhaashya te`anyonyamushitvaa munisannidhau. 6. 41

Praatarutthaaya yamunaamutteeryam munidaarakaih,

kritaaplave`na muninaa drishtamaarge`na raaghavah. 6. 42

Prayayau chitrakootaadrim vaalmeeke`ryatra chaashramamah,

gatvaa raamoatha vaalmeeke`raashramam rishisankulam. 6. 43

Naanaamrigadvijaakeernam nityapushpafalaakulam,

tatra drishtvaa samaaseenam vaalmeekim munisattamam. 6. 44

Nanaam shirasaa raamo lakshmane`na cha seetayaa,

drishtvaa raamam ramaanaatham vaalmeekirlokasundaram. 6. 45

Tvadupaasanaat jaatayaa gnaana drishtyaa aham sarvam jaanaami – I am aware of everything because of the Gnan I have got by doing Your upasana. What am I to say to You? I am fulfilled! I am getting the sakshat darshan of the Purusha who is beyond Prakriti, whether He is called the son of Dashrath-Kausalya, a manushya, Rama, or a Raghuvanshi. I see You in Your roop, which is beyond Prakriti."

Rama, Sita and Lakshman bowed down to Bharadwajji. Shri Ramachandra said, "Brahman! We are blessed by your anugraha. We have received your kripa. We are Kshatriyas; you are a vidvan Rishi."

Both experienced deep anand.'

Muni aru raama paraspara navayeen. They bowed down to each other. 'Bhagwan Ramachandra stayed at Bharadwajji's Ashram that night. Next morning they were taken across the river in rafts made by the young Brahmacharis who lived in the Ashram. The young men showed them the path to Chitrakoot, and they walked towards the Chitrakoot Parvat where Valmikiji had his Ashram.

Bhagwan Ramachandra came to Valmikiji's Ashram, which was home to many Rishis. He saw Rishis seated here and there; deer, birds, and

other animals walked about without fear. There were trees laden with fruit, and flowering shrubs all round. They saw Valmiki Muni seated there and went up to him. Rama, Sita and Lakshman bowed down to Valmiki Muni.'

Rama is Bhagwan, but He has no abhiman. Why should Bhagwan bow down to anybody? Abhiman never gets attached to Bhagwan. A person who has abhiman is not Bhagwan. There is no abhiman in Gnan or in true bhakti.

For example, you sit here, listening to the katha, and you get the felling, 'I have already heard this.' This is abhiman's sport of having Gnan. Don't think about what you already know; savor what you hear as something that is eternally new, and immerse your mana in it.

'Valmiki Muni got up when he saw the beautiful form of Shri Ramachandra approaching with Lakshman and Janaki.

Jaanakeelakshmanope`tam jataamukutamanditam,

kandarpasadrishaakaaram kamaneeyaambuje`kshanam. 6. 46

Drishtaiva sahasottasthau vismayaanimishe`kshanah,

aalingya paramaanandam raamam harshaashrulochanah. 6. 47

Poojayitvaa jagatpoojyam bhaktyaardhyaadibhiraadritah,

falamoolaih sa madhurairbhojayitvaa cha laalitah. 6. 48

Raaghavah praanjalih praaha vaalmeekim vinayaanvitah,

pituraagnaam puraskritya dandakaanaagataa vayam. 6. 49

Bhavanto yadi jaananti kim vakshyaamoatra kaaranam,

yatra me` sukhavaasaaya bhave`tsthaanam vadasva tat. 6. 50

Seetayaa sahita kaalam kinchittatra nayaamyaham,

ityuktto raaghave`naasau munih sasmitamabraveet. 6. 51

Tvame`va sarvalokaanaam nivaasasthaanamuttamam,

tavaapi sarvabhootaani nivaasaaadanaani hi. 6. 52

E`vam saadhaaranam sthaanamukttam  te` raghunandan,

seetayaa sahitasye`ti vishe`sham prichchhatastava. 6. 53

Tadvakshyaami raghushre`shtha yatte` niyatamandiram,

shaantaanaam samadrishteenaamadve`shtrinaam cha jantushu,

tvaame`va bhajataam nityam hridayam te`adhimandiram. 6. 54

Dharmaadharmanparityajya tvaame`va bhajatoanisham,

seetayaa saha te` raama tasya hritsukhamandiram. 6. 55

Tvanmantrajaapako yastu tvaame`va sharam gatah,

nirdvandvo nihsprihastasya hridayam te` sumandiram. 6. 56

Nirahankaarinah shaantaa ye` raagadve`shavarjitaah,

samaloshtaashmakanakaaste`sham te` hridayam griham. 6. 57

Tvayi dattamanobuddhiryah santushtah sadaa bhave`t,

tvayi santyakttakarmaam yastanmanaste` shubham griham. 6. 58

A crown of matted locks adorned Shri Rama's head.'

Jataamukutamanditam does not mean that Rama had a *mukut* – a crown – as well as a jata; it means, His jata was His crown. Bhagwan's roop is as attractive as a thousand Kamadevas. His eyes are like lotus petals.

'Valmiki was so wonderstruck at Rama's beauty that his eyes forgot to blink! He embraced Rama, who is Paramananda incarnate. His eyes filled with the tears of prema that rose from his hriday. He did Ramachandra's puja and offered water for washing the hands and feet. Then he took them into his hut and offered them sweet, juicy fruits to eat.

Rama folded His hands respectfully and said, “we are going to the Dandak van at My Pitaji’s aagna. You know everything. What can I tell you?”’

To repeat things that are already known to someone is meaningless. It is not proper to speak unnecessarily. We should not speak to show off our Gnan. I have observed that when people talk they go on talking about the things their mana is filled with, the things they are preoccupied with. They never think about whether it is useful to the person they are talking to. What is the point of wasting the time of others like this? We should think before we speak. Our talk should have some purpose.

‘Rama said, “what am I to tell you about why we have come to this van? Please tell Me of a place where I can stay peacefully for some time with Sita and Lakshman.”’

Goswami Tulsidasji has written about this episode very carefully, in the Ramcharitamanasa. In it Valmikiji says, ‘the whole loka stays in You, Rama, and You abide in all. You are in all and all are in You. Now, tell me, which place should I tell You to stay in? However, since You have asked me, it is my duty to answer. Stay in the hriday of the people who are shanta, have equal goodwill for all, and have dvesha for none.’

You see, even the paapi, duratma people are not worth having dvesha for. Tigers, snakes, scorpions, etc do not deserve hatred either. Dvesha negates its ashray – it keeps burning the hriday that houses it. There is nobody for whom you should harbor dvesha for, because if you have dvesha for anybody, you become the ashray of dvesha.

‘”So, the hriday of people who are free of dvesha, and do Your bhajan, is Your Mandir, Rama! The hriday of people who do tyaga of both Dharma-adharma, and do Your bhajan night and day, is where You can stay in sukha. A person who does the japa of Your mantra, and is in Your sharan, is free of ahankara, is shanta, free of raaga-dvesha, and

equally indifferent to a lump of clay, a stone, and a nugget of gold and has equanimity. The hriday of such a person is Your abode."'

'A person who has dedicated his mana and buddhi to You' – to give the mana means to give prema. Prema is not money; it is not currency that you can pick up with your hand and hand over, with a little water and akshat in the palm of your hand and make a sankalpa, *'idam manah bhagavate` samarpayaami* – I dedicate this mana of mine to Bhagwan'.

The mana is an intangible object. It can't be seen. Then, how will you give it to Bhagwan?

It is the karya of the mana that is offered up to Bhagwan. This is what is meant by dedicating your mana to Him.

What is the karya of the mana?
The karya of the mana is the sankalpas and vikalpas that arise in it; the wishes, options, prema, etc that fluctuate in it. If you have a sankalpa, it should be about Bhagwan, if you have a vikalpas it should be about Bhagwan, and if you have prema it should be for Bhagwan.

Now, even buddhi is not a tangible object. How can buddhi be dedicated to Bhagwan?

The karya of buddhi is vichar. All the vichar we do, and all the conclusions we reach, should be about Bhagwan. Don't do vichar about the sansara. A person who thinks about the sansara and reaches some conclusion about it has not dedicated his vichar to Bhagwan. Therefore, all your vichar and all your conclusions should be connected to the Ishwara.

Experience contentment always, everywhere. Just as a greedy man feels satisfied when he gets wealth, be satisfied that everything that is happening in this sansara is at Bhagwan's wish. It is happening because of His satta. The world is an instrument, wielded by Him.

Remain in peace, whatever happens. Offer up to Bhagwan the thought, 'this will happen if I do this'.

'"Rama! Stay in the hriday of people whose hriday is filled with bhakti and prema for You. This is a good house for You to stay in."'

There should be no desire in your mana for something specific to happen, or some specific person to come, or whether it is to your liking or not. You should have the conviction that the forms you see is a magic show of Bhagwan.

The word 'Maya' is a Sanskrit word. It means 'magic'. *Roopam roopam pratiroopo babhoova* – it is Bhagwan who is seen in the multiple forms.

Indra maayaabhih pururoopa eeyate` - Indra (Bhagwan is also called Indra in some places in the Vedas) possesses many types of Maya, using which He takes many forms.

Maayaaaabhaasanna jeeve`sha karoti – Maya creates the divisions of jeeva and Ishwara, by her own power of delusion.

Yo na dve`shtyapriyam praapya prityam praapya na hrishyati,

sarvam maaye`ti nishchitya tvaam bhaje`ttanmano graham. 6. 59

Shadbhaavaadivikaaraanyo de`he` pashyati naatmani,

kshuttrit sukham bhayam dukham praanabuddhyornireekshate`. 6. 60

Sansaaradharmairnimukttastasya te` maanasam graham. 6. 61

Pashyanti ye` sarvaguhaashayastham tvaam chidghanam satyamanantame`kam,

ale`pakam sarvagatam vare`nyam te`sham hridabje` saha seetayaa vasa. 6. 62

Nirantaraabhyaasadridheekritaatmanaam
tvatpaadase`vaaparinishthitaanaam,

tvannaamakeertyaa hatakalmashaanaam seetaasame`tasya griham hridabje`. 6. 63

Raama tvannaamamahimaa varnyate` vaa katham,

yatprabhaavaadaham raama brahmarshitvamavaaptavaan. 6. 64

Aham puraa kiraate`shu kiraataih saha vardhitah,

janmamaatradvijatvam me` shoodraachaararatah sadaa. 6. 65

Shoodraayaam bahavah putra utpannaah me`ajitaatmanah,

tatashchore`shcha sangamya chauroahamabhavam puraa. 6. 66

Dhanurbaanadharo nityam jeevaanaamantakopamah,

e`kadaa munayah sapta drishtaa mahati kaanane`. 6. 67

Saakshaanmayaa prakaashanto jvalanaarkasamaprabhaah,

taananvadhaavam lobhe`na te`shaam sarvaparichchhadaan. 6. 68

Graheetukaamastatraaham tishtha tishthe`ti chaabravam,

drishtvaa maam munayoaprichhankimaayaasi dvijaadhama. 6. 69

Aham taanabravam kinchidaadaatum munisattamaah,

putradaaraadayah santi bahavo me` bubhukshitaah. 6. 70

Te`sham samrakshanaarthaya charaami girikaanane`,

tato maamoochavyaagraah prichchha gatvaak. 6. 71

Yo yo mayaa pratidinam kriyate` paapasanchayah,

yooyam tadbhaaginah kim vaa ne`ti ve`ti prithakprithak. 6. 72

Vayam sthaasyaamahe` taavadaagamishyasi nishchayah,

tathe`tyuktvaa griham gatvaa munibhiryadudeeritam. 6. 73

Aprichchham putradaaraardeestairuttkoham raghoottama,

paapam tavaiva tatsarvam vayam tu bhalabhaaginah. 6. 74

Tatchhrutvaa jaatinirve`do vichaarya punaraagamam,
munayo yatra tishthanti karunaapoornamaanasaah. 6. 75
Muninaam darshanaade`va shuddhaantakaranoabhavam,
dhanuraadeenparityajya dandavatpatitoasmyaham. 6. 76
Rakshadhvam maam munishre`shthaa gachhantam nirayaarnavam,
ityagre` patitam drishtvaa maamrichurmunisattamaah. 6. 77
Uttishthottishtha bhadram te` safalah satsamaagamah,
upade`kshyaamahe` tubhyam kinchitte`naiva mokshyase`,
parasparam samaalochya durvrittoayam dvijaadhamah. 6. 78
Upe`kshya e`va sadvritte`stathaapi sharanam gatah,
rakshaneeyah prayatne`na mokshamaargopade`shatah. 6. 79
Ityuktvaa raama te` naama vyatyastaaksharapoorvakam,
e`kaagramanasaatraiva mare`ti japa sarvadaa. 6. 80
Aagachchhaamah punaryaavattaavadukttam sadaa japa,
ityuktvaa prayayuh sarve` munayoh divyadarshanaah. 6. 81
Aham yathopadishtam taistathaakaravamanjasaa,
japanne`kaagramanasaa baahyam vismritavaanaham. 6. 82
E`vam bahutithe` kaale` gate` nishchalaroopinah,
sarvasangaviheenasya valmeekoabhrinmamopari. 6. 83
Tato yugasahasraante` rishayah punaraagaman,
maamoochurnishkramasve`ti tachchhrutvaa toornamutthitah. 6. 84
Valmeekaannirgatashchaaham neehaaraadiva bhaaskarah,
maamapyaahurmuniganaa vaalmeekistvam muneeshvarah. 6. 85
Valmeekaatsambhavo yasmaad dviteeyam janma te`abhavat,

ityuktvaa te` yayurdivyagatim raghukullottama. 6. 86

Aham te` raama naamnashcha prabhaavaadeedrishoabhavam,

adya saakshaatprapashyaami saseetam lakshmane`na cha. 6. 87

Raamam raajeevapatraaksham tvaam muktto naatra sanshayah,

aagachchha raama bhadram te` sthalam vai darshayaamyaham. 6. 88

E`vamuktvaa munih shreemaanllakshmane`na samanvitah,

shishyaih parivrito gatvaa madhye` parvatagangayoh. 6. 89

Tatra shaalaam suvisteernaam kaarayaamaasa vaasabhooh,

praakpashchimam dakshinodak shobhanam mandiradvayam. 6. 90

Jaanakyaa sahito raamo lakshmane`na samanvitah,

tatra te` de`vasadrishaa hyavasan bhavanottame`. 6. 91

Vaalmeekinaa tatra supoojitoayam raamah saseetah saha lakshmane`na,

de`vairmuneendraih sahito mudaaste` svarge` yathaa de`vapatih sashachyaa. 6. 92.

Everything that is perceived to be happening is a play of Bhagwan's Maya. Things are not what they seem to be. The definition of 'Maya' given in the Bhagwat is, 'it does not exist, but seems to be real'. And, 'it is not there, but it is experienced as being there.' These are the two aspects of Maya that are given in the Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana.

So, this Paramatma is here, but we do not perceive Him. The sansara does not exist, but we perceive it. These are the two forms of Maya before us. One is our not being aware of the Ishwara's presence, even though He is present. Be alert! It is His Maya that makes us unaware of Him. His other Maya is what makes us aware of the sansara that does not exist.

So, don't get trapped in the sansara, and don't think that the Ishwara is not here; else you'll get trapped in Maya.

'"The mana of such people is Your dwelling place", said Vishwamitra.'

Vikars like the six stages of decay, from birth to death – called the *shadbhaava* – are in the deha. They have no connection with the Paramatma. Hunger, thirst, dukha, bhaya, etc are in the prana and in the buddhi.

'"The mana of a person who is free of the sansara, and has prema for You, is Your abode. Such a person sees You in the hriday of all – even in the hriday of lice and bedbugs!"'

Once, I imagined that I had cut off my thumb. I focused on the severed member for some four or six hours, to see what was inside it. It had millions of cells, each with a mana, and Bhagwan in each mana. If even a single cell were to be cut up into a million pieces, there would be a mana in each piece with Bhagwan in it. It is not that Bhagwan is present only in the hriday that is within our chest.

If a branch of a tree is cut off, doesn't it have life? That chopped off piece also has millions of living cells, each cell has a mana, and the Parameshwara in every mana.

'"Please stay in the hriday of people who – *sarvaguhaashayastha* – get the darshan of Bhagwan who abides in every hriday. The sadghan, chidghan, anandaghan, ananta and advitiya Paramatma lives in the hriday of all, but is in no way connected to the vikar of the hriday or the shareer. He is in all; He is the worthy choice of all. Please stay in the hriday-kamal of people who experience this.

O Prabhu! Stay with Sita in the hriday-kamal of people who have strived unceasingly to make their mana steady, and are dedicated to the seva of Your charan; who have washed away their paapa-taapa by doing kirtan of Your name."

Valmikiji described his own experience. “I have, myself, experienced the mahima of Bhagwan’s naam, Maharaj! How am I to describe the greatness of Your naam? What instruments have I for doing this? I have become a Brahmarshi by the power of Rama-naam! I was born in a Brahmin family, but brought up in a Bhil community. My wife was a Sudra. I had many children by her. My indriyas were uncontrolled.

Subsequently I got into the company of robbers and I became influenced by them. I kept a dhanush-baan with me and became Yamaraj for travelers. One day I saw the Saptarshis (seven Rishis who always stay together) coming into the jungle. Their shareer radiated with sublime effulgence. Greed made me accost them. I wanted to steal their danda-kamandalu etc. I told them to stop where they were.

‘I want all your possessions,’ I told them. ‘I have many sons and a wife, and they are all hungry. I will steal everything from you in order to protect and sustain them. This is why I wander in the van.’ The Mahatmas showed no fear. They remained as tranquil as though they were safe in their own Ashram. They told me, ‘my brother, do one thing at our request. Go and ask your family members whether they accept a part of the paapa you are accumulating by your sinful actions. Go to each person separately and ask this question. We will stay here until you come back. We won’t go until you return.’

(In the Bengali Ramayana written by Kritibas, Valmiki was called Ratnakar at that time.)

I did not believe that the Satarshis would wait for me; I thought they will run away as soon as I leave,” said Valmikiji. “So, I tied the seven Rishis to seven trees. They offered no resistance. They smiled at me as I tied them one by one. I went to my house and asked each member of my family the question the Munis had told me to ask. Without exception they all made it clear that they would not accept any of the paapa I did for their sake. They said that it was my duty to feed and provide for them, and they were not concerned with what I did. They

were not responsible for my paapa; they were only concerned with their requirements being met."

Valmiki told Rama, "when I heard their answer, I was overcome with a feeling of strong vairagya. I gave some thought to the subject. Then I went back to the compassionate Mahatmas and untied them. My antahkarana had become shuddha by their darshan. I threw away my weapons and did dandavat pranam to them. I prayed to them to protect me from the ocean of Narak.

The Mahatmas told me to get up. 'You have obtained the fruit of Sant-samagam,' they told me. 'You will get kalyan. We will give you upadesh, which will give you Mukti in due course.'

The Mahatmas discussed the matter among themselves. 'This Brahmin is a durachari. He is a lowly Brahmin. He deserves to be shunned by sadachari people. However, since he has come to our sharan we should try to save him and make him worthy of Moksha.'

After deliberating for some time the Rishis told me to do japa of Your naam, but backwards, chanting *'maraa-maraa'* continuously, so it automatically becomes '*raama-raama'*. They told me to do this with full concentration until they came back, and went to divine realms.

I did the japa as told, focusing my mana on Your naam, sitting unmoving. Time passed. I no longer had any asakti for anybody or anything. White ants covered my body with earth. After many years passed, the Rishis came back. 'Come out,' they told me. I came out from under layers of caked mud at once, like the sun coming out from behind clouds. As soon as I was free of the mud called 'valmiki', the Rishis said, 'this is Valmiki,' because I had emerged from an anthill. After giving me this name they went away again.

He Rama! It is thanks to Your naam that I attained this status. I see You today, with Sita and Lakshman. Kamal-nayan Bhagwan! You stand in front of me – what doubt is there, that I will get Mukti? Come, Rama! I will show You where to say!"

The Muni stood up. He went with disciples, and Lakshman, to a place between the Mandakini (Ganga) and the mountain. He had a hut made, the length of which was from east to west, and the breadth from north to south. He had another hut made, the length of which was from south to north and the breadth from east to west. Rama and Janaki stayed in one hut and Lakshman in the other. They lived like Devtas living in Swarga.

Valmiki spared no effort in offering them all hospitality. He showed all reverence to them. Bhagwan Rama began to live there in great anand.

Ayodhya Kanda

The Seventh Sarga

Dashrath's Swarga and antyeshthi.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Sumantroapi tadaayodhyaam pravive`sha ha,
vaster`na mukhamaachchhaadya vaashpaakulitalochanah. 7. 1
Bahire`va ratham sthaapya raajaanam drashtumaayayau,
jaya shabde`na raajaanam stutvaa tam prananaama ha. 7. 2
Tato raajaa namantam tam sumantram vihvaloabraveet,
sumantra raamah kutraaste` seetayaa lakshmane`na cha. 7. 3
Kutra tyakttastvayaa raamah kim maam paapinamabraveet,
seetaa vaa lakshmano vapi nirdayam maam kimabraveet. 7. 4
Haa raama haa gunanidhe` haa seete` priyavaadini,
dukhaarnave` nimagna maam mriyamaanam na pashyasi. 7. 5
Vilapyaivam chiram raajaa nimagno dukhasaagare`,
e`vam mantree rudantam tam praanjalirvaakyamabraveet. 7. 6
Raamah seetaa cha saumitrirmayaa neetaa rathe`na te`,
shringave`rapuraabhyaashe` gangaakoole` vyavasthitaah. 7. 7
Guhe`na kinchidaaneetam falamoolaadikam cha yat,
sprishtaa haste`na sampreetyaa naagraheedvisasarja tat. 7. 8
Vataksheeram samaanaayya guhe`na raghunandanah,
jataamukutamaabaddhya maamaaha nripate` svayam. 7.9
Sumantra broohi raajaanam shokaste`astu na matkrite`,
saake`taadadhikam saukhyam vipine` no bhavishyati. 7. 10

Maaturme` vandanam broohi shokam tyajatu matkrite`,
aashvaasayatu raajaanam vriddham shokapariplutam. 7. 11
Seetaa chaashrupareetaakshee maamaaha nripasattama,
dukhagadgadayaa vaachaa raamam kinchidave`kshatee. 7. 12
Saashtaangam pranipaatam me` broohi shvashravoh padaambuje`,
iti prarudatee seetaa gataa kinchidavaanmukhee. 7. 13
Tataste`ashrupareetaakshaa naavamaaruruhustadaa,
yaavadgangaam samutteerya gataastaavadaham sthitah. 7. 14
Tato dukhe`na mahataa punare`vaahamaagatah,
tato rudantee kausalyaa raajaanamidamabraveet. 7. 15
Kaike`yyai priyabharyaayai prasanno dattavaanvaram,
tvam raajyam de`hi tasyaiva matputrah kim vivaasitah. 7. 16
Kritvaa tvame`va tatsarvamidaaneem kim nu rodishi,
kausalyaavachanam shrutvaa kshate` sprishta ivaagninaa. 7. 17
Punah shokaashrupoornaakshah kausalyaamidamabraveet,
dukhe`na mriyamaanam kim punardukhayasyalam. 7. 18
Idaaneeme`va me` praanaa utkramishyanti nishchayah,
shaptoaham baalyabhaave`na ke`nachinmuninaa puraa. 7. 19
Puraaham yauvane` driptashchaapabaanadharo nishi,
acharam mrigayaasaktto nadyaasteere` mahaavane`. 7. 20
Tatraardharaatrasamaye` munih kashchittrishaarditah,
pipaasaarditayoh pitrorjalamaane`tumudyatah,
apoorayajjale` kumbham tadaa shabdoabhavanmahaan. 7. 21
Gajah pibati paaneeyamiti matvaa mahaanishi,

baanam dhanushi sandhaaya shabdave`dhinamakshipam. 7. 22
Haa hatoasmeeti tatraabhoochchhabdo maanushamsoochakah,
kasyaapi na krito dosho mayaa ke`na hato vidhe`. 7. 23
Prateekshate` maam maataa cha pitaa cha jalakaankshayaa,
tachchhrutvaa bhayasantrastoaham paurusham vachah. 7. 24
Shanairgatvaa tatpaarshvam svaamin dasharathoasmyaham,
ajaanataa mayaa viddhastraatumarhasi maam mune`. 7. 25
Ityuktvaa paadayostasya patito gangadaaksharah,
tadaa maamaaha sa munirmaa bhaisheernripasattama. 7. 26
Brahmahatyaa sprishe`nna tvaam vaishyoaham tapasi sthitah,
pitarau maam prateekshe`te` kshuttrinbhyaam paripeeditau. 7. 27
Tayostvamudakam de`hi sheeghrame`vaavichaarayan,
na che`ttvaam bhasmasaatkuryaatpitaa me` yadi kupyati. 7. 28
Jalam dattvaa tu tau natvaa kritam sarvam nigve`daya,
shalyamuddhara me` de`haatpraanastyakshyaami peeditah. 7. 29
Ityuktto muninaa sheeghram baanamutpaatya de`hatah,
sajalam kalasham dhritvaa gatoaham yatra dampatee. 7. 30
Ativriddhaavandhyadrishau kshutpipaasaarditau nishi,
naayaati salilam grihya putrah kim vaatra kaaranaam. 7. 31
Ananyagatikau vriddhau shochyau tritparpeeditau,
aavaamupe`kshate` kim vaa bhakttimaanaavayoh sutah. 7. 32
Iti chintaa vyaakulau to matpaadanyaasajam dhvanim,
shrutvaa praaha pitaa putra kim vilambah kritastvayaa. 7. 33
De`hyaavayoh supaaneeyam piba tvamapi putraka,

ityeˋvam lapatorbheetyaa sakaashamagamam shanaih. 7. 34

Paadayoh pranipatyaahamabravam vinayaanvitah,

naaham putrastvayodhyaayaa raajaa dasharathoasmyaham. 7. 35

Paapoaham mrigayaasaktto raatrau mrigavihimakah,

jalaavataaraaddooreˋaham sthitvaa jalagatam dvanim. 7. 36

Shrutvaaham shabdaveˋdhitvaadeˋkam baanamathaatyajam,

hatoasmeeti dhvanim shruutvaa bhayaattatraahamaagatah. 7. 37

Jataa vikeerya patitam drishtaaham munidaarakam,

bheeto griheetvaa tatpaadau raksha raksheˋti chaabravam 7. 38

Maa bhaisheeriti maam praaha brahmahatyaabhayam na teˋ,

matpitroh salilam dattvaa natvaa praarthaya jeevitam. 7. 39

Ityuktto muninaa teˋna hyaagato munihinsakah,

raksheˋtaam maam dayaayukttau yuvaam hi sharanaagatam. 7. 40

Iti shrutvaa tu dukhaartau vilapya bahu shochya tam,

patitau nau suto yatra naya tatraavilambayan. 7. 41

Tato neetau suto yatra naya mayaa tau vriddhadampatee,

sprishtvaa sutam tau hastaabhyaam bahushoatha vileˋpatuh. 7. 42

Haaheˋti krandamaanau tau putraputreˋtyavichataam,

jalam deˋheeti putreˋti kimartham na dadaasyalam. 7. 43

Tato maamoochatuh sheeghram chitim rachaya bhoopateˋ,

mayaa tadaiva rachitaa chitistatra niveˋshitaah,

trayastatraagnirutsrishto dagdhyaasteˋ tridivam yayuh. 7. 44

Tatra vriddhah pitaa praaha tvamapyeˋvam bhavishyasi,

putrashokeˋna maranam praapsyaseˋ vachanaanmama. 7. 45

Sa idaaneem mama praaptah shaapakaaloanivaaritah,
ityuktvaa vilalaapaatha raajaa shokasamaakulah. 7. 46
Haa raama putra haa seete` haa lakshmana gunaakara,
tvadviyogaadaham praapto mrityum kaike`yisambhavam. 7. 47
Vadanne`vam dasharathah praanaamstyaktvaa divam gatah,
kausalyaa cha sumitraa cha tathaanyaa raajayoshitah. 7. 48
Chukrushushcha vile`pushcha urastaadanaprirvakam,
vasishthah prayayau tatra praatarmantribhiraavritah. 7. 49
Tailadronyaam dasharatham kshiptvaa dritaanathaabraveet,
gachchhata tvaritam saashvaa yudhaajinnagaram prati. 7. 50
Tatraaste` bharatah shreemaanchhatrughnasahitah prabhuh,
uchyataam bharatah sheeghramaagachchhe`ti mamaagnayaa. 7. 51
Ayodhyaam prati raajaanam kaike`yeem chaapi pashyatu,
ityukttaastvaritam dritaa gatvaa bharatamaatulam. 7. 52
Yudhaajitam pranamyochurbharatam saanujam prati,
vasishthastvaabraveedraajan bharatah saanujah prabhuh. 7. 54
Aayayau gurunaadishtah saha dootaistu saanujah,
raagno vaa raaghavasyaapi dukham kinchidupasthitam. 7. 55
Iti chintaaparo maarge` chintayannagaram yayau,
nagaram bhrashtalakshmeekam janasambaadhavarjitam. 7. 56
Utsavaishcha parityakttam drishtvaa chintaaparoabhavat,
pravishya raajabhavanam raajalakshmeevivarjitam. 7. 57
Apashyatkaike`yeem tatra e`kaame`vaasane` sthitaam,
nanaam shirasaa paadau maaturbhakttisamanvitah. 7. 58

Aagatam bharatam drishtvaa kaike`yee pre`masambhramaat,
utthhayaalingya rabhasaa svaankamaaropya sansthitaa. 7. 59
Moordhanyavaghraaya paprachchha kushalam svakulasya saa,
pitaa me` kushalee bhraataa maataa cha shubhalakshanaa. 7. 60
Dishtyaa tvamadya kushalee mayaa drishtoasi putraka,
iti prishtah sa bharato maatraa chintaakule`ndriyah. 7. 61
Dooyamaane`na manasaa maataram samaprichchhata,
maatah pitaa me` kutraaste` e`kaa tvamiha sansthitaa. 7. 62
Tvayaa vinaa na me` taatah kadaachidrahasi sthitah,
idaaneem drishyate` naiva kutra tishthati me` vada. 7. 63
Adrishtvaa pitaram me`adya bhayam dukham cha jaayate`,
athaaha kaike`yee putram kim dukhe`na tavaanagha. 7. 64
Yaa gatirdharmasheelaanaamashvamedhaadiyaajinaam,
taam gatim gatavaanadya pita ate` pitrivatsala. 7. 65
Tachchhritvaa nipapaatorvyaam bharatah shokavivhalah,
haa taata kva gatoasi tvam tyaktvaa maam vrijinaarnave`. 7. 66
Asamarpyaiva raamaaya raagne` maam kva gatoasi bhoh,
iti vilapitam putram patitam mukttamoordhajam. 7. 67
Utthaapyaamrijya nayane` kaike`yee putramabraveeet,
samaashvasihi bhadram te` sarvam sampaaditam mayaa. 7. 68
Taamaaha bharatastaato mriyamaanah kimabraveeet,
tamaaha kaike`yee de`vee bharatam bhayavarjitaa. 7. 69
Haa raama raama seete`ti lakshmane`ti punah punah,
vilapanne`va suchiram de`ham tyktvaa divam yayau. 7. 70

Taamaaha bharato he`amba raamah sannihito na kim,

tadaaneem lakshmano vaapi seetaa vaa kutra te` gataah. 7. 71

Kaike`yyuvaacha

Raamasya yauvaraajyaartham pitaa te` sambhramah kritah,

tava raajyapradaanaaya tadaaham vighnamaacharam. 7. 72

Raagnaa dattam hi me` poorvam varade`na varadvayam,

yaachitam tadidaaneem me` tayore`ke`na te`akhilam. 7. 73

Raajyam raamasya chaike`na vanavaaso munivratam,

tatah satyaparo raajaa raajyam dattvaa tavaiva hi. 7. 74

Raamam sampre`shayaamaasa vaname`va pitaa tava,

seetaapyanugataa raamam paativratyamupaashritaa. 7. 75

Saubhraatram darshayanraamamanuyaatoapi lakshmanah,

vanam gate`shu sarve`shu raajaa taane`va chintayan. 7. 76

Pralapan raama raame`ti mamaara nripasattamah,

iti maaturvachah shrutvaa vajraahata iva drumah. 7. 77

Papaata bhoomau nihsangnastam drishtvaa dukhitaa tadaa,

kaike`yee punarapyaaha vatsa shoke`na kim tava. 7. 78

Raajye` mahati sampraapte` dukhasyaavaasarah kutah,

iti bruvanteemaalokya maataram pradahanniva. 7. 79

Asambhaashyaasi paape` me` ghore` tvam bhartrighaatinee,

paape` tvadgarbhajaatoaham paapavaanasmi saampratam,

ahamagnim prave`kshyaami visham vaa bhakshayaamyaham. 7. 80

Khange`na vaatha chaatmaanam hatvaa yaami yamakshayam,

bhritrighaatini dushte` tvam kumbheepaakam gamishyasi. 7. 81

Iti nirbhartsyam kaike`keem kausalyaabhavanam yayau,

saapi tam bharatam drishtvaa muktakanthaa ruroda h. 7. 82

Paadayoh patitastasyaa bharatoapi tadaarudat,

aalingya bharatam saadhvee raamamaataa yashasvinee,

krishaatideenavadanaa saashrune`tre`damabraveet. 7. 83

Putra tvayi gate` doorame`vam sarvamabhoodidam,

ukttam maatraa shrutam sarvam tvayaa te` maatriche`shtitam. 7. 84

Putrah sabhaaryo vaname`va yaatah salakshmano me` raghuraamachandrah,

cheeraambaro baddhajataakalaapah santyajya maam dukhasamudragraam. 7. 85

Haa raama haa me` raghuvanshanaatha jaatoasi me` tvam paratah paraatmaa,

tathaapi dukham na jahaati maam vai vidhirbaleeyaaniti me` maneeshaa. 7. 86

Sa e`vam bharato veekshya vilapanteem bhrisham shuchaa,

paadau griheetvaa graahe`dam shrunu maatarvacho mama. 7. 87

Kaike`yyaa yatkritam karma raamaraajyaabhishe`chane`,

anyadvaa yadi jaanaami saa mayaa noditaa yadi. 7. 88

Paapam me`astu tadaa maatarbrahmhatyaashatodbhavam,

hatvaa vasishtham khange`na arundhatyaa samanvitam. 7. 89

Bhooyaattatpaapamakhilam mama jaanaami yadyaham,

itye`va shapatham kritvaa ruroda bharatastadaa. 7. 90

Kausalyaa tamathaalingya putra jaanaami maa shuchah,

e`tasminnantare` shrutvaa bharatasya samaagamam. 7. 91

Vasishtho mantribhih saardham prayayau raajamandiram,
rudantam bharatam drishtvaa vasishthah praaga saadaram. 7. 92
Vriddho raajaa dasharatho gnaanee satyaparaakramah,
bhuktvaa martyasukham sarvamishtvaa vipuladakshinaih. 7. 93
Ashvame`dhaadibhiryagnairlabdhvaa raamam sutam harim,
ante` jagaama tridivam de`ve`ndraarddhasanam prabhuh. 7. 94
Tam shochasi vrithaiva tvamashochyam mokshabhaajanam,
aatmaa nityoavyayah shuddho janmanaashaadivarjitah. 7. 95
Shareeram jadamatyarthamapavitram vinashvaram,
vichaaryamaapo shokasya naavakaashah kathanchana. 7. 96
Pitaa vaa tanayo vaapi yadi mrityuvasham gatah,
moodhaastamanushochanti svaatmataadanapporvakam. 7. 97
Nihsaare` khalu sansaare` viyogo gnaaninaam yadaa,
bhave`dvairaagyahe`tuh sa shaantisaukhyam tanoti cha. 7. 98
Janmavaanyadi loke`asminstarhi tam mrityuranvagaat,
tasmaadaparihaaryoayam mrityurjanmavataam sadaa. 7. 99
Svakarmavashatah sarvajantoonaam prabhavaapyayau,
vijaananannapyavidvaanyah katham shochiti baandhavaan. 7. 100
Brahmaandakotayo nashtaah srishtayo bahusho gataah,
shushyanti saagaraah sarve` kaivaasthaa kshanajeevite`. 7. 101
Chalapatraantalagnaambubinduvatkshanabhanguram,
aayustyave`laayaam kastatra pratyayastava. 7. 102
De`hee praakttanade`hotthakarmanaa de`havaanpunah,
tadde`hotthe`na cha punare`vam de`hah sadaatmanah. 7. 103

Yathaa tyajati vai jeernam vaaso grihnati nootanam,

tathaa jeernam parityajya de`hee de`ham punarnavam. 7. 104

Bhajatye`va sadaa tatra shokasyaavasarah kutah,

aatmaa na mriyate` jaatu jaayate` na cha vardhate`. 7. 105

Shadbhaavarahitoanantah satyapragnaanavigrahah,

aanandaroopo buddhyaadisaakshee layavivarjitah. 7. 106

E`ka e`va paro hyaatmaa hyadviteeyah samah sthitah,

ityaatmaanam dridham gnaatvaa tyaktvaa shokam kuru kriyaam. 7. 107

Tailadronyaah piturde`hamudghrityaa sachivaih saha,

krityam kuru yathaanyaayamasmaabhih kulanandana. 7. 108

Iti sambodhitah saakshaad gurunaa bharatastadaa,

visrijyaagnaanajam shokam chakre` savidhivatkriyaam. 7. 109

Gurunokttaprakaare`na aahitaagne`ryathaavidhih,

sanskritya sa piturde`ham vidhidrishte`na karmanaa. 7. 110

E`kaadashoahani praapte` braahmanaanve`dapaaragaan,

bhojayaamaasa vidhivachchhatashoatha sahasrashah. 7. 111

Uddishya pitaram tatra braahmane`bhyo dhanam bahu,

dadau gavaam sahasraani graamaan ratnaambaraani cha. 7. 112

Avasatsvagrihe` yatra raamame`vaanuchintayan,

vasishthe`na saha bhraataa mantribhih parivaaritah. 7. 113

Raame`aranyam prayaate` saha janakasutaalakshmanaabhyaam sughora maataa me` raakshaseeva pradahati hridayam darshanaade`va sadyah,

gachchhaamyaaranyamadya sthiramatirakhilam dooratoapaasya raajyam raamam seetaasame`tam smitaruchiramukham nityame`vaanuse`ve`. 7. 114.

'Shri Ramachandra sent Sumantra back after they came to the bank of the Gangaji. Sumantra obeyed, but he did not have the heart to go into Ayodhya while there was daylight. He kept his face covered to avoid being recognized, as he entered the city after dark. Tears ran down his cheeks as he stopped outside the main door of the palace and went in. He said, "Jai ho!" and bowed down to Raja Dashrath.

Dashrath became emotional at the sight of his trusted mantri. "Where are Rama, Lakshman and Sita?" he asked. "Where did you leave them? What did they say about their paapi pita? Didn't they blame me for being cruel to them?

Oh Rama! You are a treasury of gunas. O Sita! You always talk with sweetness. I am sinking into a sea of dukha. Look – I am dying! Can't you see me?"

Sumantra folded his hands and said, "I drove Rama, Sita and Lakshman in the chariot. We came to Shringaverpur, on the banks of the Ganga. Guha brought fruits etc for them, but Rama did not accept anything. He touched all the items brought by Guha respectfully, and explained that He intended to fast that day.

Ramachandra asked Guha to get him some sap of a banyan tree. He applied this to his hair and tied a jata on His head. Then He did the same for Lakshman. Rama told me, 'go to Pitaji. Tell him not to feel sad for Me, because I will get even more sukha in the van than I would in Ayodhya. Please console him when you get back to Ayodhya. Tell him not to grieve for Me.

Tell My Mata that I bow down at her feet. Tell her that she must not grieve for Me at all. Please comfort her; she is filled with grief.'

Sitaji's eyes brimmed with tears. She looked at Ramachandra with dukha in her eyes. Her voice was choked with emotion as she told me, 'go and tell my mother-in-law and my father-in-law that I bow down at their feet.' Then she began to weep. Her head was bent low. She could not say anything more.

All three of them had tears in their eyes when they got into the boat to go across the Gangaji. I stood there, watching them, until I could not see them anymore. I felt great dukha, and have come in a state of great dukha."

Kausalya told Dashrathji, "you were pleased with your dear patni Kaikeyi, and gave her the Rajya for her son; that is all right. The Rajya is yours. You can give it to whoever you wish. However, why did you send my son to the van? You did all this and now you are weeping!"

This was like rubbing salt into the wound. Tears fell fast from Dashrath's eyes. He told Kausalya, "Devi, I am dying of dukha. You should not increase my dukha at such a time. My prana is leaving my shareer, because I have been given a shaap that I will die in viyoga of my putra.

When I was a young man I would wander in the jungle at night with my dhanush-baan to do shikar," said Dashrath.'

The Vaishnava Dharma is the same for all four Varnas – the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishya and Sudra. It is a *saamaanya* Dharma, a common rule, for all the stratas of society. The specific Dharma applies separately to the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. The Dharma of Bhakti is also a samanya Dharma. Anybody can become a bhakta, regardless of which Varna he belongs to.

The ability to hit a moving target is important for a Kshatriya. Arjuna and Shri Krishna are considered to be the perfect examples of skilled archers.

‘Dashrathji said, “I was standing by the river at night. I heard the sound of water being lapped up. I thought it is a wild elephant drinking water, and aimed my arrow at the sound. My baan struck a manushya. He called out in pain. ‘Oh, I am mortally wounded! I have not done to harm to anybody; why has somebody shot me? My mother and father are thirsty, waiting for me to bring them water to drink.’

Frightened by these words I ran to the spot. I told the man that I am Raja Dashrath, and my intention was to kill a wild beast, not a manushya. I fell at his feet in distress.

The man was a noble person. My baan had wounded him badly. His life was ebbing away fast, and yet he wanted my good. His hriday was filled with bhakti for his parents. He told me, ‘don’t be afraid, Raja, I am not a Brahmin. You will not get the paapa of Brahma-hatya.’ Even while dying he wanted to give me some consolation.

He said, ‘I am a Vaishya, established in tapasya. My Mata and Pita are sitting nearby, hungry and thirsty. Please put aside all thought about me and take this water for them. If they don’t get water, and they come to know about my getting wounded, their anger will turn you into ashes because of their tapasya. So, first quench their thirst and then explain what you have done unintentionally. Remove this baan from my shareer; I am about to die.’

I did as he said and went to the old couple with the water for them. They sat waiting for their son. They were very old and they were blind. They were suffering from pangs of hunger and thirst, worried as to why their son had not yet come. They knew he never neglected them. When they heard my footsteps they called out, ‘Beta, what delayed you? Give us water quickly; we are extremely thirsty!’”

Dashrathji was narrating this tragic incident of long ago.

‘”I did pranam at the feet of this aged couple. I told them, ‘I am Raja Dashrath. I am a great paapi. I had come to do shikar at night. I heard the sound of water being stirred and thought it is a wild animal

drinking water, and aimed my baan at the sound. Unwittingly it hit your son.'

The old couple wept piteously," said Dashrathji. "They told me to take them to their son. They touched his shareer with loving hands, calling out, 'Beta', why aren't you giving us water with your own hands?' Then they told me to make a chita. They sat on it with the shareer of their son, giving up their shareers in the flames. All three went to Swarga. At that time, the father told me, 'I am dying due to viyoga of my son; you will also die because of viyoga from your son. My words will come true.' Now the time has come for his shaap to be vindicated."

Raja Dashrath was sunk in grief. He called out, "Ha Rama! Ha Sita! Ha Lakshman! I am dying because of viyoga from you!"'

Raja Dashrath went to Swarga. There was a vasana in him to see Rama become the Raja of Ayodhya, so Bhagwan sent him to Swarga, to live there in luxury until Rama was crowned Raja of Ayodhya, before attaining Mukti.

'Kausalya, Sumitra and the other Ranis lamented, beating their chests in grief. Vasishthaji came. He gave instructions for Dashrath's shareer to be kept in a boat, immersed in oil. He told messengers to go with all speed to Yudhajit and ask for Bharat and Shatrughna to be sent back at once. "Tell them to leave without delay, but don't say anything more. Just tell them to come at once to Ayodhya and meet the Raja and Kaikeyi."'

Vasishthaji did not tell the men that the Raja had died, and Bharat would meet only Kaikeyi. Bharat would have become suspicious had he taken only Kaikeyi's name. What is the harm if a manushya is given bad news a little later? There are many people who are in great haste to convey bad news with all speed. When anybody delays giving news that is bound to cause pain, it is a sign of benevolence.

'The messengers went and told Yudhajit, Bharat and Shatrughna what they had been told to say.'

It is not that you should telephone or send a telegram to ask what has happened, if you are summoned urgently. The Guru's aagna is to be obeyed instantly and unquestioningly. The aagna of a revered person overrules the inclination of the mana.

'Bharat thought that some cause of dukha in Ayodhya must be the reason for Guruji's aagna. Some problem must have arisen for the Raja, Rama, or Lakshman, for Guruji to summon them urgently. "Else, Pitaji is there, Guruji himself is there, Bhagwan Ramachandra is there – what need could there be to send for us?"

When Bharat and Shatrughna reached Ayodhya they saw the city bereft of splendor. The roads were empty and everything looked gloomy. Bharat felt disturbed. He went into the Raj Bhavan. He saw Kaikeyi sitting alone on the throne. He went and did pranam to his Mata.

Kaikeyi was in high spirits. She had not been told that Bharat and Shatrughna had been summoned from her brother's place. She got up and embraced Bharat. She made him sit on her lap and smelled his hair in blessing. She began to ask about her relatives.'

The callousness of Kaikeyi's hriday is shown here. She was utterly unconcerned about the dukha that pervaded the people of Ayodhya. Her only concern was the well-being of her mother's family. The fact is that after a woman gets married her jeevan is the jeevan of her husband's family, not her maternal family. If she continues to have a weakness for her father's family, her vyavhar will not be what it should be. She will begin to make mistakes in her behavior with her in-laws. Furthermore, a woman should not gossip about one family to the other.

'Kaikeyi said, "I hope all is well with my brother and mother? I am happy to have you both back well and happy."

Bharatji felt pained. He asked, "Mataji, you never stay by yourself, like this. My Pitaji is always with you in your palace. Why are you alone

today? Pitaji never goes anywhere without you. Please tell me where he has gone. I feel extremely uneasy."

Bharatji did not discuss the sukha-dukha of his maternal relatives. Kaikeyi said, "Beta, why do you feel dukha for your Pitaji? He has got the gati that great Dharmatmas get, which people get if they have done great Yagnas like the Ashvamedha Yagna, and done great punya, daan, etc. I know you have great prema for your Pitaji, but he has gone to the Punya-loka; what is the use of grieving for him?"

Bharatji collapsed when he heard this. Distrait with shock and grief, he called out, "Ha Pitaji! Ha Pitaji! Where have you gone, leaving me floundering in this sea of dukha? Why didn't you entrust my hand in Rama's; why did you leave me without putting me in the care of Raja Rama?"'

Asamarpaiva raamaaya raagne` maam kva gatoasi bhoh – Bharat's dukha was more because Dashrath had not entrusted him to Rama before leaving this world, than his death.

'Bharat's hair was strewn wildly in his anguish as he lay on the floor. Tears flowed from his eyes. Kaikeyi lifted him up and wiped his tears. "Beta," she said, "please compose yourself. I have arranged everything satisfactorily."

"What did Pitaji say, when he was giving up his shareer?" asked Bharatji.

"He said 'Ha Rama! Ha Rama! Ha Sita! Ha Lakshman!' Saying this he gave up his shareer."

"Where were Rama, Sita and Lakshman? Weren't they with Pitaji when he breathed his last?" asked Bharat.

Kaikeyi said, "Your Pitaji had made great preparations for making Ramji the Yuvaraj. I blocked this, to make you the Yuvaraj. A long time back Raja had given me two varadaans, and I asked for them. One was for the Rajya to be given to you, and the other was for Rama to be sent

to the van for fourteen years. Your Pitaji accepted my demands and sent Rama for vanavas. Sita went with him, following her pativrata Dharma, and your brother – Sumitra's son – also went with him in a display of brotherly love. Raja worried about them after they left. He kept calling out Rama's name as he breathed his last."

There was no sign of pity in Kaikeyi's voice, no tears in her eyes, nor any sign of sorrow. Bharat fell in a faint like a tree felled from its roots. Kaikeyi felt dukha at the sight of her son's state. She told him, "Beta, what is the use of feeling dukha? You have got such a vast Rajya; what cause is there for dukha?"'

Occassionally I get an invitation from some Raja that will surprise you. The letter contains two paragraphs. The first says, 'it is a matter of great dukha that Maharaja-dhiraj so and so has gone to Swarga on such and such a date.' The second paragraph says, 'it is a matter of great joy that the Rajya-abhishek of Raj Kumar so and so will be done on this date, at this time. You are invited to come and give ashirvad to him.' The good and bad news are given in the same letter. This is called the sansara. One is dead and one is celebrating his own sukha.

'Kaikeyi said, "what is the use of grieving? This is not an occasion for sorrow – you have got such a vast Rajya."

Krodha arose in Bharat when he heard his mothers' words. He told Kaikeyi, "it is of no use to even talk to you! Your mana is filled with paapa. It is cruel. Your Pati died because of you, and yet you feel no dukha! I am born from your womb; I am paapi. I will enter into fire, consume poison, or cut my throat with my sword. You will also go in paapa because you have killed your husband."

Rebuking his mother sharply, Bharat went to Kausalya.

Kausalya began to weep when she saw Bharat. She told him about what Kaikeyi had done. "Ramachandra, Sita and Lakshman went to the van," she wept. 'Ramachandra and Lakshman wore the yellow garments of ascetics, with their hair tied in a jata. I am sunk in a sea of

dukha. Ha Rama! Ha Raghuvansha Nath! You were born from my stomach, but I know that You are the Paramatma. But still, my dukha does not leave me. The Vidhata is very powerful!"

Seeing Kausalya lament like this, Bharat caught her feet. "Mata!" he cried piteously, "listen to me! I know nothing about what Kaikeyi has done to block Rama's Rajyabhishek, or anything else. In no way am I connected to any of this. May I get the paapa of killing a hundred Brahmins if I am lying! I will get the paapa of killing Vasishtha and Arundhati if I am involved in any way with what Kaikeyi had done!"

Bharat swore of his innocence of any knowledge or involvement in the two varas demanded by Kaikeyi. He wept bitterly, unable to control his feeling of wretchedness. Kausalya held him close to her hriday and comforted him. She told him, "Beta, I know this. There is no need for you to swear on your oath that you are innocent. Don't grieve."

Vasishthaji came to the Rajmandir as soon as he heard that Bharat was back. He saw the state Bharat was in. He said, "Look, Bharat, Raja Dashrath was very aged. He was a Gnani. His valor was Satya. He got all the bhoga a manushya can get in this world. He gave dakshina lavishly, did many Yagnas like the Ashvamedha Yagna. Furthermore, he obtained the Parameshwara as his son, in the form of Rama. And, at the end, he went to Swarga. He has been given half of Indra's throne. Please don't grieve for him. He should not be mourned; he is eligible for Moksha!"'

This shareer is anitya. It is transient. It is ashuddha, but the Atma is shuddha. The shareer is subject to janma-maran, but the Atma is not. The shareer is jada and apavitra; the Atma is chetan and pavitra, eternal and unchanging.

If you compare the Atma and the anatma, there is no scope for shoka. Anybody can die at any time – pita or putra – *pitaa vaa tanayo vaapi yadi mrityuvashangatah.* So, you should not grieve if this happens. You should not punish your Atma. This sansara has no substance.

If some viyoga comes into the jeevan of a Gnani it increases his vairagya, increases his shanti, and he gets sukha. He becomes free of mental tension. A person who has the right understanding gets vairagya, shanti and sukha when he is detached from the people and objects of the sansara.

Mrityu is attached to everything created in this sansara. It is inevitable for every being that is born. *Svakarmavashatah sarvajantoonaam prabhaavaapyayau* – the janma and maran of every being is according to his karmas. Why should anybody grieve in the sansara if he has the right understanding?

Millions of Brahmandas have been created and destroyed – *brahmaandakotyo nashtah srishtayo bahusho gataah* – who knows how many srishtis have been altered and how many oceans dried up? What cause is there for shoka for them?

The great poet Kalidas has written – *maranam prakritih shareerinaam vikritirjeevitamuchyate` buddhaih* (Raghuvansha 8. 87). It is the nature of a bubble of water to burst and merge into the water. Its temporary existence is the vikar of water. Thus, the vikar of water is to become a bubble, and the svabhava of water is for the buddle to burst. Hence, to die is the svabhava and to live in a separate form is the vikar.

There is no reason to be dukhi about this. Life is like a drop of water hanging precariously on the edge of a leaf; it can fall at any moment. The state of the jeeva is the same.

Nobody can predict when the power will be cut off suddenly. There is a kind of electricity that activates the shareer. When did the fuse blow? When did the electricity get cut off? Nobody can predict when this will happen.

The jeevatma sits in the deha as the *de`hee* – as the owner of the deha. The deha is shed and another, new deha is acquired, the way we shed our dirty clothes and wear fresh ones. What we perceive as new and old is not called new-old; you cannot say that this shareer was very

young. When it is over it is called, ‘old age’. When just a little bhoga is pending, it results in the demise of a young shareer. There is no cause for grief. The Atma never dies; nor is it ever born, and neither does it age. The Atma is not subject to the shad-vikar of the shareer. It is ananta, Sacchidanandaghana, vignan-anand-ghana. It is the roop of anand, and the sakshi of the buddhi, etc.

Actually, everything that is seen by the individual is the sansara. The one who sees the individuals is the one Parameshwara, and a person who has got the anubhav of the Parameshwara is the sakshat Brahman.

Make three divisions – the jeevatma who sees the sansara, the one Parameshwara who sees the innumerable jeevatmas, and the one who shows that the one Parameshwara is the svayam-prakash sakshat Para-Brahman, in whom the Ishwara, jeeva, and jagat are not separate. This is our anubhav-swarup, anand-swarup sakshi of the buddhi. In this, there is no srishti and no laya.

The point is that the sadhak is first made to experience the truth of the matter by the use of the *vaakya* – the ultimate statement of the Vedas. This reality cannot be experienced with the use of the eyes, nose, tongue, etc. The Mahavakya is used to develop a vritti in the antahkarana. When this vritti is developed it destroys agnan, and the vritti is also destroyed at the same time. Only the Atma remains; and the Atma is not separate from the Paramatma.

‘”The Paramatma is beyond everything. It is one, and advitiya. It is sama – equal and unchanging, the only Satya. It is eternal; everything else is transient. Obtain Gnan by this method and give up shoka. Do the work you have to do. Take the shareer of your pita out of the boat and drain out the oil. Do the sanskaras of his shareer according to our ancient customs, as guided by Guruji.”

On the eleventh day, Bharat arranged for a feast of a thousand vidvan Brahmins with the sankalpa that his father should get sukha-shanti from their ashirvad. He gave daan lavishly with the same feeling.

Bharatji's concern for Ramji made him forget even his Pitaji. His hriday resonated with Rama-naam continuously. Guru Vasishtha was with him, his brother Shatrughna was with him, but Bharatji's mana was with Rama – *raamame`vaanuchintayan.* He kept thinking, "Ramji has gone to the van."'

The word 'aranya' in Sanskrit means sharanya – the one in whom we take sharan – *artum yogyam – artum aranyam* - the place we should go to at the end, where we can do bhajan undisturbed, That is the meaning of aranya.

'"Ramachandra went away to the aranya. Janaknandini Janaki and Lakshman went with Him. When I see my Mata my heart burns as though I am looking at a Rakshasi! I have decided to leave this Rajya and go to the van, to Rama. I will do darshan of Shri Ramachandra's and Sita's smiling faces, and do their seva. I no longer feel like staying here. I will go to Rama!"thought Bharat.'

A manushya who gives up vichar and making resolves is no longer a manushya.

Ayodhya Kanda

The Eighth Sarga.

Shri Bharat's going to the van.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Vasishtho munibhih saardham mantribhih parivaaritah,

raagnah sabhaam de`vasabhaasannibhaamavishadvibhuh. 8. 1

Tatraasane` samaaseenashchaturmukha ivaaparah,

aaneeya bharatm tatra upave`shya sahaanujam.8. 2

Abraveedvachanam de`shakaalochitamarindamam,

vatsa raajye`abhishek`kshyaamastvaamadya pitrishaasanaat. 8. 3

Kaike`yyaa yaachitam raajyam tvadartham purusharshabha,

satyasandho dasharathah pratignaaya dadu kila. 8.4

Abhishe`ko bhavatvadya munibhirmantrapoorvakam,

tachshrutvaa bharatoapyaaha mama raajye`na kim mune`. 8. 5

Raamo raajaadhiraajashcha vayam tasyaiva kinkaraah,

shvahprabhaate` gamishyaamo raamamaane`tumanjasaa. 8. 6

Aham yooyam maatarashcha kaike`yeem raakshaseem vinaa,

hanishyaamyadhunaivaaham kaike`yeem maatrigandhineem. 8. 7

Kintu maam no raghushre`shthah streehantaaram sahishyate`,

tachshobhoote` gamishyaami paadachaare`na dandakaan. 8. 8

'Vasishthaji went to the Court of Ayodhya along with the other Munis and Ministers. He looked like the four-headed Brahma as he sat there. Bharatji was asked to come. He came with Shatrughnaji. They both sat down.'

This means that Bharatji did not volunteer to go to the Raj-sabha. He was not interested in Court matters.

'Vasishthaji spoke words that were appropriate to the place and time. He told Bharat, "Beta, it is your Pitaji's command that your Rajyabhishek should be done. Kaikeyi asked that the Rajya should be given to you. Your Pita, Dashrath, was satya-sandh – he was true to his word, and he gave Kaikeyi what she asked for. Your abhishek should be done today. The Mantris who know the mantras, and the Munis should chant the appropriate mantras."

This was Bharat's chance to say what was in his heart. He said, "Munivar, what will I do with the Rajya? Rama is the Rajadhiraj. We are all His servants."

Without consulting anybody, Bharat made an announcement then and there. "Tomorrow morning, I will set off to bring Rama back to Ayodhya. You may come with me, but leave the Rakshasi Kaikeyi behind. Let my other Matas and the Rishi-Munis come. Kaikeyi has the scent of a mother, but she is not a mother! I would kill her, but for the fact that Ramachandra would never forgive me if I did so. Tomorrow morning, Shatrughna and I will set off for the Dandakaranya on foot."

Shatrughnasahitastoornam yooyamaayaata vaa na vaa,

raamo yathaa vane` yaatastathaaham valkallambarah. 8. 9

Falamoolakritaahaarah shatrughnasahito mune`,

bhoomishaayee jataadhaaree yaavadraamo nivartate`.

8. 10

Iti nishchitya bharatastooshneeme`vaavatasthivaan,

saadhusaadhviti tam sarve` prashashansurmudaanvitaah.

8. 11

Tatah prabhaate` bharatam gachchhantam sarvasainikaah,

anujagmuh sumantre`na noditaah saashvakunjaraah. 8. 12

Kausalyaadyaa raajadaaraa vasishthapramukhaa dvijaah,

chhaadayanto sarve` prishthatah paarshvatoagratah. 8. 13

Shringave`rapuram gatvaa gangaakoole` samantatah,

uvaasa mahatee se`naa shatrughnaparichoditaa. 8. 14

Aagatam bharatam shrutvaa guhah shankitamaanasah,

mahatyaa se`nayaa saardhamaagato bharatah kila. 8. 15

Paapam kartu na vaa yaati raamasyaaviditaatmanah,

gatvaa taddhridayam gne`yam yadi shuddhastarishyati. 8. 16

Gangaa noche`tsamaakrishya naavastishthantu saayudhaah,

gnaatayo me` samaayattaah pashyantah sarvatodisham. 8. 17

Iti sarvaansamaadishya guho bharatamaagatah,

upaayanaani sangrihya vividhaani baoonyapi. 8. 18

Prayayau gnaatibhih saardham bahubhirvividhaayudhaih,

nive`dyopaayanaanyagre` bharatasya samantatah. 8. 19

Drishtvaa bharatamaaseenam saanujam saha mantribhih,

cheeraambaram ghanashyaamam jataamukutadhaarinam. 8. 20

Raamame`vaanushochantam raamaraame`ti vaadinam,

nanaama shirasaa bhoomau guhoahamiti chaabraveet. 8. 21

‘”Listen to one thing more – *shatrughnasahitastoornam, yooyamaayaata vaa na vaa* – you people may come or not come; it matters not to me,” said Bharat.’

Jaake` priya na raama vade`hee, tajiye` taahi koti bairee sama jadyapi parama sane`hee.

Taje`hu pitaa prahalaada, vibheeshana bandhu, bharata mahaataaree,

bali guru tajyo kanta braja vanitanhi, bhaya` muda mangalakaaree.

Naate` ne`ha raamake` maniyata suhrida suse`vya jahaan laun,

anjana kahaa aankhi je`hi foote`, bahutaka kahaun kahaan laun.

Tulasi so saba bhaanti parama hita poojya praana te` pyaaro,

jaason hoya sane`ha raamapada e`to mato hamaaro.

Tulsidasji has written, 'all relationships are through Rama, our greatest well-wisher, whose servant I am. Of what use is the lamp-black if it harms the eyes? Tulsi's opinion is to have a connection only with people who give us love for Rama's charan. They give the greatest benefit, which is dearer to me than prana itself.'

'Bharatji said, "whether anybody comes with us or not, I will go in the same way as Rama went, wearing valkal and a jata. I will walk barefoot and sleep on the ground, and eat wild berries, flowers etc, as He does. I will live in this way until Rama comes back to Ayodhya."

After telling the people of his resolve, Bharatji was silent. The people cried "Sadhu! Sadhu!" in approbation.

At sunrise next day, Sumantra arranged the train that had horses, elephants, chariots, soldiers, Kausalya and Dashrath's other queens, and the wives of the Brahmins and people to look after their needs. The caravan was so vast that it seemed to cover the entire dharati. They reached Shringaverpur the same day, and settled by the Gangaji for the night. Shatrughna was in charge of arranging for everybody's comfort. Nishadraj Guha was the ruler of Shringaverpur.'

These days, people are using a method to tell people that Nishadraj and Guha were different people. I don't know of any such thing.

‘Nishadraj Guha felt suspicious about the purpose of the Army going with Bharatji, whether his intentions were good or not. He felt anxious in case Bharatji had enmity for Rama.’

This is a matter of prema. Rama has no doubts in His mana, but His devoted bhaktas are always anxious about others’ intentions for Him.

Anishtaashankeeni bandhuhridayaati bhavanti.

Both Lakshman and Nishad Raj are constantly watchful about anyone trying to harm Ramachandra. Nishadraj decided to first find out Bharat’s intentions. ‘If his hriday is clean he will cross the Ganga safely; if not, my people will gather their boats and stand fully armed, to stop Him from going across,’ he decided. Giving the order to his men, Nishadraj went to Bharatji, loaded with gifts.

Guha was skilled in diplomacy. He placed the gifts before Bharatji. He saw that Bharatji was wearing cheer-valkal and a jata. He was dark-skinned, like Rama. He was chanting Rama-naam continuously.

Sheeghramutthaapya bharato gaadhamaalingya saadaram,

prishtvaanaamayamavyagrah sakhaayamidamabraveet. 8. 22

Bhraatastvam raaghave`naatra same`tah samavasthitah,

raame`naalingitah saardranayane`naamalaatmanaa. 8. 23

Dhanyoasmi kritakrityoasi yattvayaa paribhaashitah,

raamo raajeevapatraaksho lakshmane`na cha saatayaa. 8. 24

Yatra raamastvayaa drishtstatra maam naya suvrata,

seetayaa sahito yatra suptastaddarshayasva me`. 8. 25

Tvam raamasya priyatamo bhakttimaanasi bhaagyavaan,

iti samsmritya samsmritya raamam saashruvilochanah. 8. 26

Guhe`na sahitastatra yatra raamah sthito nishi,

yayau dadarsha shayanasthalam kushasamaastritam. 8. 27

Seetaaaabharanasamlagnasvarnabindubhirarchitam,

dukhasantaptahridayo bharatah paryade`vayat. 8. 28

Ahoatisukumaaree yaa seetaa janakanandinee,

praasaade` ratnaparyanke` komalaastarane` shubha`. 8. 29

Raame`na sahitaa she`te` saa katham kushavishtare`,

seetaa raame`na sahitaa dukhe`na mama doshatah. 8. 30

Dhik maam jaatoasmi kaike`yyaam paaparaashisamaanatah,

mannimittamidam kle`sham raamasya paramaatmanah. 8. 31

Ahoatisafalam janma lakshmanasya mahaatmanah,

raamame`va sadaanve`ti vanasthamapi hrishtadheeh. 8. 32

Aham raamasya daasaa ye` te`shaam daasasya kinkarah,

yadi syaam safalam janma mama bhooyaanna sanshayah. 8. 33

Bhraatarjaanaasi yadi tatkatthayasva mamaakhilam,

yatra tishthati tatraaham gachchhaamyaane`tumanjasaa. 8. 34

Guhastam – shuddhahridayam gnaatvaa sasne`hamabraveet,

de`va tvame`va dhanyoasi yasya te` bhakttireedrishee. 8. 35

Raame` raajeevapatraakshe` seetaayaam lakshmane` tathaa,

chitrakootaadrinikate` mandaakinyavidooratah. 8. 36

Muneenaamaashramapade` raamastishthati saanujah,

jaanakyaa sahito nandaatsukhamaaste` kila prabhuh. 8. 37

Tatra gachchhaamahe` sheeghram gangaam tartumihaarhasi,

ityuktvaa tvaritam gatvaa naavah panchashataani ha. 8. 38

Samaanayatsasainyasya tartum gangaam mahaanadeem,

svayame`vaaninaayaikaam raajanaavam guhaastadaa. 8. 39

Aaropya bharatam tatra shatrughna raamamaataram,

vasishtham cha tathaanyanna kaike`yeem chanyayoshitah. 8. 40

Teertvaa gangaam yayau sheeghram bharadvaajaashramam prati,

doore` sthaapya mahaasainyam bharatah saanujo yayau. 8. 41

Aashrame` munimaaseenam jvalantamiva paavakam,

drishtvaa nanaama bharatah saashtaangamatibhakttitah. 8. 42

Gnaatvaa daasharathim preetyaa poojayaamaasa mauniraat,

paprachchha kushalam drishtvaa jataavalkaladhaarinam. 8. 43.

Sakhaayamidamabraveeta – Bharatji greeted Guha as a friend. He said, "my dear brother stayed here with you. Rama held you close to His heart. His eyes were filled with tears of prema for you – *saardranayane`naamalaatmanaa.* You are blessed! You are fulfilled that Rama, Lakshman and Sita came, and you welcomed them lovingly. Take me to the place where you got their darshan. Show me the place where Ramji slept that night, along with Sita. You are dear to Rama. You are filled with bhakti for Him. You are extremely fortunate."

Tears flowed from Bharatji's eyes as he said this – *iti sansmritya sansmritya raamam saashru vilochana.* Bharatji went with Guha to the place where Rama had slept that night. A mattress of kusha grass was there with some scattered pieces of gold that had fallen off Sitaji's ornaments.'

Goswami Tulsidasji has written:

K*anaka bindu dui chaarika de`khe`.*

Bharatji saw a few pieces of gold.

'Bharatji's hriday was laden with dukha. He began to lament, "Janak's daughter Sita is so delicate! She is used to sleeping in a palace on a soft bed studded with gems. She slept here, on a grass mattress! It is

my dosha that Sita-Rama have to face such suffering. I am accursed – *dhigmayaam jaatoasmi kaike`yyaam paaparaashisamaanatah* – Kaikeyi is like a heap of paapa. I am accursed to be born of her. It is because of me that Rama has to face such suffering.

Lakshman is a Mahatma; he has achieved the purpose of his birth. He always walks behind Rama in the van, and is happy. I am the servant of the dasa of Rama's dasa. If I was in Lakshman's place I would feel fulfilled.

He Nishadraj! Please tell me everything you know. Where will Ramachandra be today? I want to go there and bring Him back to Ayodhya."

Guha was convinced that Bharat's hriday was shuddha. He replied lovingly. "Deva, you are dhanya to have such bhakti for kamal-nayan Rama, Lakshman and Sita. They will be close to Chitrakoot parvat, beside the Mandakini river, among the Ashrams of the Munis. Rama is in anand with Janaki. We will go there very quickly."

Guha went and brought the Royal boat. Bharatji, Shatrughnaji, Rama's mothers and Vasishthaji got into it. Kaikeyi and the other ladies went in another boat. The whole party was taken across the Gangaji to the other bank. They came to the Ashram of Bharadwaj Muni. Bharatji told the army to stop at some distance and walked to the Ashram with Shatrughnaji.

Bharadwajji's personality glowed like fire. Bharatji went and bowed down to him. On hearing that they were the sons of Dashrath, he welcomed them warmy and aksed about their well-being. "So, you have become the Raja?" he asked. "This is what I have heard. What brings you here wearing cheer-valkal and jata?"'

Raajyam prashaasataste`adya kime`tadvalkalaadikam,

aagatoasi kimartham tvam vipinam munise`vitam. 8. 44

Bhradvaajavachah shrutvaa bharatah saashrulochanah,

sarvam jaanaasi bhagavan sarvabhootaashayasthitah. 8. 45

Tathaapi prichchhase` kinchittadanugraha e`va me,

kaike`yyaa yatkritam karma raamaraajyavidhaatanam. 8. 46

Vanavaasaadikam vaapi na hi jaanaami kinchana,

bhavatpaadayugam me`adya pramaanam munisattam. 8. 47

Ityuktvaa paadayugalam mune`h sprishtvaaaarttamaanasah,

gnaatumarhasi maam de`va shuddho vaashuddha e`va vaa. 8. 48

Mama raajye`na kim svaamin raame` tishthati raajani,

kinkaroaham munishre`shttha raamachndrasya shaashvatah. 8. 49

Ato gatvaa munishre`shtha raamasya charanaantike`,

patitvaa raajyasambhaaraan samarpyaannaiva raaghavam. 8. 50

Abhishe`kshye` vasishthaadyaih paurajaanapadaih saha,

ne`shye`ayodhyaayaam ramaanaatham daasah se`ve`atineechavat. 8. 51

Ityudeeritamaakarnya bharatasya vacho munih,

aalingya moordhanyavaghraaya prashashansa savismayah. 8. 52

Vatsa gnaatam puraivaitadbhavishyam gnaanachakshushaa,

maa shuchastvam paro bhakttah shreeraame` lakshmanadapi. 8. 53

Aatithyam kartumichchhaami sasainyasya tavaanagha,

adya bhuktvaa sasainyastvam shvo gantaa raamasannidham. 8. 54

Yathaaaagnaapayati bhavaanstathe`ti bharatoabraveet,

bharadvaajastvapah sprishtvaa maunee homagrihe` sthitah. 8. 55

Dadhau kaamaduhaam kaamavarshinaam kaamado munih,

asrijatkaamadhuk sarvam yathaakaamamalaukikam. 8. 56

Bharatasya sasainyasya yathe`shtam cha manoratham,

yathaa vavarsha sakalam triptaaste` sarvasainikaah. 8. 57

Vasishtham poojayitvaagre` shaastradrishte`na karmanaa,

pashchaatsasainyam bharatam tarpayaamaasa yogiraat. 8. 58

Ushitvaa diname`kam tu aashrame` svargasannibhe`,

abhivaadya punah praatarbhadvaajam sahaanujah,

bharatastu kritaanugnah prayayau raamasannidhim. 8. 59

Chitrakootamanupraapya doore` sansthaapya sainikaan,

raamasandarshanaakaankshee prayayau bharatah svayam. 8. 60

Shatrughne`na sumantre`na guhe`na cha parantapah,

tapasvimandalam sarvam vichinvaano nyavartata. 8. 61

Adrishtvaa raamabhavanamaprichchhadrishimandalam,

kutraaste` seetayaa saardham lakshmane`na raghoottamah. 8. 62

Oochuragre` gire`h pashchaadgagangaayaa uttare` tate`,

vivikttam raamasadanam ramyam kaananamanditam. 8. 63

Safalairaamrapanasaih kadaleekhandasamvrittam,

champakaih kovidaaraishcha putraagairvipulaistathaa. 8. 64

E`vam darshitamaalokya munibhirbharatoagratah,

harshaad yayau raghushre`shthabhavanam mantrinaa saha. 8. 65

Dadarsha dooraadatibhaasuram shubham raamasya ge`ham munivrindase`vitam,

vrikshaagrasanlagnasuvalkalaajinam raamaabhiraamam bharatah sahaanujah. 8. 66

Kime`tadvalkalaadikam – why this valkal etc? This is a place for Munis to stay.

‘Tears came to Bharat’s eyes as he spoke. “Bhagavan! You are seated in the hriday of all; you know what is in people’s hriday! In spite of knowing everything you ask me – that is your anugraha. Kaikeyi created a vighna in Rama-Rajya, and gave vanavas to Him. I was completely unaware of this – *na hi jaanaami kinchit.* I touch your feet and swear that this is true. Your charan are the praman of what I say; the only proof that I can give, that I knew don’t know anything more.”

Bharatji caught Bharadwajji’s feet and sat there, greatly agitated. Then he said, “Maharaj, please know that I am shuddha. When Rama is my Maharaja, what use have I for the Rajya? I am His eternal kinkar. I am going to Ramachandra’s charan. I will fall at His feet and dedicate all the items for the abhishek to Him. I will get His abhishek done, with Vasishthaji, the Ministers, and the people. I will take Ramachandra, Sita and Lakshman back to Ayodhya and do His seva as His lowliest servitor.”’

A sevak is one who is ready to render the humblest service to his master,

‘Bharadwaj embraced Bharat when he heard this. He smelled his head to bless him, and praised him with great wonder. “Beta, my Gnan-drishti has given this information to me. Don’t be dukhi. You are an even greater bhakta of Rama than Lakshman.”’

Goswamiji has said the same thing even more emphatically – ‘*te`hi fala kara fala darasa tumhaaraa* – getting your darshan is the fruit of getting the darshan of Rama, Sita and Lakshman.’

It is possible to obtain Bhagwan’s darshan when a person is alone, but not the darshan of His bhakta. Only somebody who practices extreme fortitude can get Bhagwan’s darshan and recognize that it is Bhagwan.

‘Bharadwajji told Bharat, “stay here today with your army. Have your food here, and go to Rama tomorrow.” Bharatji obeyed.

Bharadwajji took a bath and went into his Yagna-shala and sat in mauna. He did dhyana of the Kamadhenu – the wish-fulfilling cow, because he wanted to fulfill everybody's desires. Kamadhenu came, and created all the things the people wanted.'

The Valmiki Ramayana has a detailed description, over several chapters, about the hospitality of Bharadwaj Muni. It is described that the soldiers were so pleased to get everything they wanted, that they felt reluctant to leave the Ashram. The purpose of this description is not to show fickleness on the part of the soldiers; it is to show the excellence of Bhardwajji's hospitality.

We had a Mahatma who used to say that it is not that everybody in Ayodhya had prema for Rama. The soldiers found the Ashram so enticing, full of comforts and pleasures, that they forgot Ayodhya and forgot about Rama!

Bharadwajji did Vasishthji's puja with the proper rituals. He did everything to give satisfaction to Bharatji and the people in his entourage.

'The entire company stayed at Bharadwajji's Ashram that day. It seemed like Swarga to them. The next morning they bowed down to him and took his leave. Before they reached Chitrakoot Bharatji told the others to wait there, and went ahead with Shatrughna and Guharaj. He went to the Munis' Ashram and looked everywhere for Rama, among the Munis doing tapasya. He could not see Rama. He asked the Mahatmas where Ramji was staying.'

That means, when Bharat, Shatrughna and Guha were unable to see Rama, the Rishis and Mahatmas told them, 'Rama is here.' Then they got Gnan about Rama. Gnan about Rama cannot be obtained by any kalpana of the mana. It is not something anybody can guess or assume. It is the Rishis who tell us where the Paramatma is.

Thus, the Rishis pointed out the place where Shri Rama stayed with Sita and Lakshman. They pointed out Rama's hut, built close to the

river Mandakini, in the centre of some trees, including fruit trees like mango, jack-fruit, banana etc. The hut was surrounded by flowering shrubs.

Bharatji went forward and looked from afar. He saw many great Rishis sitting there. Cheer-valkal garments and deerskins were laid out in the sun. Bharat and Shatrughna did darshan of beautiful Rama and then went closer. Bharatji saw the beautiful footprints of Sita-Rama on the ground.

Ayodhya Kanda

The Ninth Sarga

The Meeting of Rama and Bharat.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Atha gatvaaaashramapadasameepam bharato mudaa,

seetaaraamapadairyukttam pavitramatishobhanam. 9. 1

Sa tatra vajraankushavaarijaanchitadhvajaadichinhaani padaani sarvatah,

dadarsha raamasya bhuvoatimangalaanyache`shtyatpaadarajah su saanujah. 9. 2

Aho sudhanyoahamamooni raamapaadaaravindaankitabhootalaani,

pashyaami yatpaadarajo vimrigyam brahmaadide`vaih shrutibhishcha nityam. 9. 3

Ityadbhutapre`marasaaplutaashayo vigaadhache`taa raghunaathabhaavane`,

aanandajaashrusrapitastaanaantarah shanairavaapaashramasannidhim hare`h. 9. 4

Sa tatra drishtvaa raghunaathamaasthitam doorvaadalashyaamalamaayate`kshanam,

jataakireetam navavalkalaambaram prasannavaktram tarunaarunadyutim. 9. 5

Vilokayantam janakaatmajaam shubhaam saumitrinaa se`vitapaadapankajam,

tadaabhidudraava raghuttamam shuchaa harshaashcha tatpaadayugam tvaraagraheet. 9. 6

Raamastmaakritya sudeerghabaahurdobhyaam parishvanya sishincha ne`trajaih,

jalairathaankopari sanyave`shayat punah punah samparishsvajai vibhuh. 9. 7

Bhagwan's footprints have certain marks which makes it easy to identify that these footprints are Bhagwan's.

'Bharatji saw that the footprints had the marks of the Vajra that Bhagwan uses to destroy the mountain of paapa accumulated by His bhaktas. He saw the mark of an *ankusha* – a goad by which mahouts control elephants – which Bhagwan uses to attract the mana of His bhaktas, because the mana is like an untrained elephant. Bharat saw the mark of a kamal – Bhagwan does daan of His hriday-kamal to His bhaktas. He saw the sign of a *dhvajaa* – a flag that proclaims the victory of His bhaktas, and the mangal of the Prithivi.

Bhagwan has descended on to this earth for the kalyan of the Prithivi. He left Vaikuntha and came to the mortal world to give His *charana-raja* – the dust of His feet – to the Prithivi and His bhaktas.

Bharat and Shatrughna lay down on the ground over Bhagwan's footprints and smeared their shareers with His charan-raja – *ache`shtayan paadarajahsu saanujah.'*

Akrura had rolled on the ground over Shri Krishna's charan-raja in the same way, in Vraja. The words used here are very similar to those used in the Bhagwat.

'"This dust, that has Bhagwan Rama's charan-chinha is wonderful! We are blessed to get this darshan. Brahma and other Devtas seek Bhagwan's charan-raja,' said Bharatji. Bharatji's hriday was filled with an overwhelming prema-rasa, thinking about Raghunath. Tears of prema poured down his face. He proceeded towards Bhagwan's Ashram. He saw Shri Raghunath sitting there. His shareer was blue-hued, like druva grass. He was wearing valkal garments and His hair

was tied in a jata on the top of His head, like a mukut. His face was radiant with an inner joy. An effulgence like the effulgence of the rising sun emitted from His shareer. He was looking at Janakiji, and Lakshmanji was doing the seva of His feet.

Bharatji ran and fell at His feet. Ramachandra quickly lifted him up and held him in a close embrace. The brothers' tears mingled. Shri Rama made Bharat sit on His lap, embracing him again and again.

Then, the Matas came running towards Ramachandra, like cows run to their calves after a day's grazing in the woods.

Atha taa maatarah sarvaah samaajagmustvaraanvitaah,

raaghavam drashtukaamaastaastrishaartaa gauryathaa jalam. 9. 8

Raamah svamaataram veekshya drutamutthhaya paadayoh,

vavande` saashru saa putramaalingyaateeva dukhitaa. 9. 9

Itaraashcha tathaa natvaa jananee raghunandanah,

tatah samaagatam drishtvaa vasishtham munipungavam. 9. 10

Saashtaangam pranipatyaaha dhanyoasmeeti punah punah,

yathaarhamupave`shyaaha sarvaane`va raghoodvahah. 9. 11

Pitaa me` kushalee kim vaa maam kimaahaatidukhitah,

vasishthastamuvaache`dam pitaa te` raghunandana. 9. 12

Tvadviyogaabhitaptaatmaa tvaame`va parichintayan,

raamaraame`ti seete`ti lakshmane`ti mamaara ha. 9. 13

Shrutvaa tatkarnashoolaabham gurorvachanamanjasaa,

haa hatoasmeeti patito rudan raamah salakshmanah. 9. 14

Tatoanururuduh sarva maatarashcha tathaapare`,

haa taata maam parityajya kva gatoasi ghrinaakara. 9. 15

Anaathoasmi mahaabaaho maam ko vaa laalaye`ditah,

seetaa cha lakshmanashchaiva vile`paturato bhrisham. 9. 16

Vasishthah shaantavachanaih shamayaamaasa taam shucham,

tato mandaakineem gatvaa snaatvaa te` veetakalmashaah. 9. 17

Raagne` dadurjalam tatra sarve` te` jalakaankshane`,

pindaannirvaayaamaasa raamo lakshmanasanyutah. 9. 18

Ingudeefalapinyaakarachitaanmadhusamplutaan,

vayam yadannaah pitarastasannaah smritinoditaah. 9. 19

Iti dukhaashrupoornaakshah punah snaatvaa graham yayau,

sarve` ruditvaa suchiram snaatvaa jagmustadaashramam. 9. 20

Tasminstu divase` sarve` upavaasam prachakrire`,

tatah pare`dyurvimale` snaatvaa mandaakineejale`. 9. 21

Upavishtham samaagamya bharato raamamabraveet,

raama raama mahaabhaaga svaatmaanamabhishe`chaya. 9. 22

'Trishaartaa gauryathaa jalam' – Rama stood up when He saw the Matas coming. He went forth and bowed down at Kausalya's feet. Her eyes were filled with tears. Ramachandra bowed down to the other Matas. He saw Guru Vasishtha coming and went forth and did sashtanga pranam. "I am dhanya, Maharaj! You have done a great kripa on Me by coming."

When everybody has sat down comfortably, Ramachandra asked, "My Pitaji is well, I hope. What message has he sent for Me? I know that he is extremely dukhi for Me."

There was absolute silence. Then Vasishthaji said, "Your Pitaji suffered because of being separated from You. He was doing Your chintan and uttering 'Rama-Rama! Sita-Sita! Lakshman-Lakshman!' as he left his shareer and went to the Param-dham."

This was like a spear piercing the ears, for Rama-Lakshman. They were prostrate with grief. Rama began to lament, “Ha Pitaji! You were very compassionate – where have you gone, leaving Me behind? I have become an orphan. Who will give Me the kind of prema I got from you?”

Sita and Lakshman also began to weep. Vasishthaji comforted them. Everybody went to the Mandakini and took a bath to remove the *paataka* – the defilement of the death of a close relative.’

The Dharma-Shastras say that if a person gets the news of the death of a close relative within eleven days of the event, he should take a bath and observe mourning for the remaining days. If he gets the information after eleven days are over, he should only take a bath to remove the impurity.

‘Bharatji had completed all the rituals of Dashrathji’s last rites in Ayodhya before he set out to bring Rama back to Ayodhya. When Ramachandra came to know of Dashrathji’s mrityu He went and took a bath in the Mandakini. So did Lakshman and Sita. They did tarpan, offering oblations to Dashrathji. Then Rama and Lakshman did the pinda-daan for him. This ritual is done by the eldest son, but Bharatji had done it since Rama had already left Ayodhya. Ramachandra made the offering of the pinda with fruit, honey etc, since that was what they ate in the van.’

The rule for this is, *vayam yadannaah pitarastadannaah smritinoditaah.*

Manuji has said, *yadannah purusho bhavati tadannaah tasya de`vataah* – a manushya offers the Devtas what he himself eats.

The rule of the Smriti is that the pinda-daan should be made of the same kind of food that is eaten by the person doing the pinda-daan.

‘After completing the ritual they came back to the Ashram. Everybody fasted that day.’

The rule is to fast – keep an upavasa – the day a person goes to a Tirtha. It is the same as doing an ekadashi vrata. Ramachandra had done the pinda-daan for Dashrathji that day. He had just heard about His father's mrityu, so it was right and proper for Him to do an upavasa.

'Ramachandra did an upavasa that day. The next morning everybody took a bath in the Mandakini. Then they sat down to discuss things. A meeting was held. Bharat placed a petition, "He Rama, please give me the aagna to do Your abhishek. Please give Your consent to this. Look after the Rajya, because it belonged to Pitaji and You are his eldest son. Just as he was my elder, so are You. You are like my father.

Raajyam paalaya pitryam te` jye`shthastvam me` pitaa yathaa,

kshatriyaanaamayam dharmo yatprajaaparipaalanam. 9. 23

Ishtvaa yagnairbahuvidhaih putraanutpaadya tantave`,

raajye` putram samaaropya gamishyasi tato vanam. 9. 24

Idaaneem vanavaasasya kaalo naiva praseeda me`,

maaturme` dushkritam kinchidsmrtu neerhasi paahi nah. 9. 25

Ityuktvaa charanau bhraatuh shirasyaadhaaya bhakttitah,

uvaacha bharatam raamah sne`haardranayanah shanaih. 9. 26

Shrunu vatsa pravakshyaami tvayokttam tat,

uvaacha bharatam raamah sne`haardranayanah shanaih. 9. 27

Shrunu vatsa pravakshyaami tvayokttam yattathaiva tat,

kintu maamabraveettaato nava varshaani pancha cha. 9. 28

Ushitvaa dandakaaranye` puram panchaatsamaavishah,

idaaneem bharataaye`dam raajyam dattam mayaakhilam. 9. 29

Tatah pitraiva suvyakttam raajyam dattam tavaiva hi,

dandakaaranyaraajyam me` dattam pitraa tathaiva cha. 9. 30

Atah piturvachah kaaryamaavaabhyaamatiyatnatah,

piturvachanmullanghya svatantra yastu vartate`. 9. 31

Sa jeevanne`va mritako de`haante` nirayam vraje`t,

tasmaadraajyam prashaadhi tvam vayam dandakapaalakaah. 9. 32

Bharatastvabraveedraama kaamuko moodhadheeh pitaa,

streejito bhraantahridaya unmatto yadi vakshyati,

tatsatyamiti na graahyam bhraantavaakyam yathaa sudheeh. 9. 33

Shreeraama uvaacha

Na streejitah pitaa brooyaanna kaamee naiva moodhadheeh,

poorvam pratishrutim tasya satyavaadee dadau bhayaat. 9. 34

“”Jye`shastvam me` pitaa tathaa - You are my elder brother, and being elder, You are like my Pita”, said Bharat. “It is the Kshatriya Dharma that You do the pujas and Yagnas, beget sons, give the Rajya to Your eldest son, and then go to the van. This is not the proper time for vanavas. So, be pleased with me. Remove from Your mind all the bad things done by my mother, and protect me.”

Bharatji caught Ramachandra’s charan with great prema and fell at His feet in a dandavat pranam. Ramachandra bent down and lifted him up. He made Bharat sit on His lap.”Vatsa,” He said, “what you have said about the elder brother being like the father, and being given the Rajya, is true. However, Pitaji’s aagna is for Me to live in the Dandakaranya for fourteen years, and then go to a city. At this time, the entire Rajya is given to Bharat. Pitaji took this decision and proclaimed it clearly to everybody.

It is the duty of a putra to fulfill the wish of his pita. It is not proper to flout Pitaji’s aagna and do anything that is contrary to it. It would be a

great aparadh if we did that. And so, Bharat, you rule Ayodhya and I will rule the Dandakaranya."

Bharat said, "my Pitaji was a lustful man. He had become inert where his wife was concerned because he was under her influence. His hriday was deluded and he was in a state of intoxication. The aagna he gave at that time should not be accepted as valid."

Ramachandra said, "Bharatji, what you say about Pitaji is not correct. Pitaji was neither subjugated by his patni, nor was his buddhi stupefied with lust."'

It is worth noting the goodwill with which Ramachandra accepted His banishment.

'"Pitaji had made a pledge, long back, and he kept that pledge because he was a Satyavadi, a Satya-nishtha. He took this decision to protect his word because he did not want to be false to the pledge he had made. He feared asatya. It is the svabhava of a Mahapurusha to fear asatya even more than Narak.

Bharat! Pitaji made a pratigna and so did I.

Asatyaadbheetiradhikaa mahataam narakaadapi,

karomeetyahamapye`tatsatyam tasyai pratishrutam. 9. 35

Katham vaakyamaham kuryaamasatyam raaghavo hi san,

ityudeeritamaakrnya raamasya bharatoabraveet. 9. 36

Tathaiva cheeravasano vane` vatsyaami suvrata,

chaturdasha samaastvam tu raajyam kuru yathaasukham. 9. 37

Karomeetyahampye`tatsatyam tasyai pratishrutam – I also made a pratigna to Kaikeyi that I would do what she asked Pitaji to do. I am of the vansha of Raghu – how can I make My word false? How can I make Ptaji's promise false?"

Bharatji became agitated when he heard this. “Very well,” he said. “If You do not accept, then I will stay in the van for fourteen years, wearing cheer-valkal, and You go to Ayodhya, and rule the Rajya. I will do vanavas in Your stead.”

Shri Ramachandra told him, “Look, Bharat, Pitaji has given you the Rajya of Ayodhya and given Me the van. If we make an agreement and reverse his decision, his word will be proved false.

Shreeraama uvaacha

Pitraa dattam tavaivaitadraajyam mahyam vanam dadau,

vyatyayam yadyaham kuryaamasatyam poorvavat sthitam. 9. 38

Bharata uvaacha

Ahamapyaagamishyaami se`ve` tvaam lakshmano yathaa,

noche`tpraayopave`she`na tyajaamye`tatkale`varam. 9. 39

Itye`vam nishchayam kritvaa darbhaanaasteerya chaatape`,

masanaapi vinishchitya praanmukhopavive`sha sah. 9. 40

Bharatasyaapi nirbandham drishtvaa raamoativismitah,

ne`traantasangnaam gurave` chakaara raghunandanah. 9. 41

E`kaante` bharatam praaha vasishtho gnaaninaam varah,

vatsa guhyam shrunushve`dam mama vaakyaatsunishchitam. 9. 42

Raamo naaraayanah saakshaadbrahmanaa yaachitah puraa,

raavanasya vadhhrthaaya jaato dasharathaatmajah. 9. 43

Yogamaayapi seete`ti jaataa janakanandinee,

she`shoapi lakshmano jaato raamamanve`ti sarvadaa. 9. 44

Raavanam hantukaamaaste` gamishyanti na sanshayah,

kaike`yyaa varadaanaadi yadyannishthurabhaashanam. 9. 45

Sarvam de`vakritam noche`de`vam saa bhaashaye`tkatham,

tasmaattyajaagraham taata raamasya vinivartane`. 9. 46

Nivartasva mahaasainyairmaatribhih sahitah puram,

raavanam sakulam hatvaa sheeghrame`vaagamishyati. 9. 47

Iti shrutvaa gurorvaakyam bharato vismayaanvitah,

gatvaa sameepam raamasya vismayotfullalochanah. 9. 48

Paaduke` de`hi raaje`ndra raajyaaya tava poojite`,

tayoh se`vaam karomye`va yaavadaagamanam tava. 9. 49

Ityuktvaa paaduke` divye` yojayaamaasa paadayoh,

raamasya te` dadau raamo bharataayaatibhakttitah. 9. 50

Griheetvaa paaduke` divye` bharato ratnabhooshite`,

raamam punah parikramya prananaama punah punah. 9. 51

Bharatah punaraahe`dam bhaktyaa gadgadayaa giraa,

navapanchasamaante` tu prathame` divase` yadi. 9. 52

Naagamishyasi che`drama pravishaami mahaanalam,

baadhamitye`va tam raamo bharatam sannyavartayat. 9. 53

Sasainyah savasishthashcha shatrughnasahitah sudheeh,

maatribhirmantribhih saardhyam gamanaayopachakrame`. 9. 54

Kaikeyee raamane`kaante` sravanne`trajalaakulaa,

praanjalih praaha he` raama tava raajyavidhaatanam. 9. 55

Asatyam poorvavat sthitam - how will Pitaji's pledge be observed if we do this?"

Bharatji said, "I will also go to the van with You. I will stay as Lakshman stays. If You refuse to accept this, *noche`tpraayopave`she`na tyajaamye`tatkale`varam,* I will fast until I die."

Guruji took Bharat aside and told him, “look, Beta, I am telling you something very secret. Know that what I say is absolutely Satya.”’

Bharat’s prema for Rama was so great that he refused to budge from his resolve until Guruji gave him the Gnan that Rama is the Ishwara.

‘”Rama is sakshat Narayana,” explained Guru Vasishtha to Bharat. “He has come as Dashrath’s putra at Brahmaji’s prarthana, to kill Ravan. Sita is His Yoga-Maya, born in Janak’s house. Shesh Bhagwan has come in the form of Lakshman. He followes Rama wherever He goes. There is no doubt that the three of them will go to the van to kill Ravan. The varadaan Kaikeyi asked for, and the cruel words she spoke, is the leela of the Devtas. Else, how can Kaikeyi say such things for Rama?

Therefore, Bharat, give up the insistence to take Rama back to Ayodhya, and go back with the Matas, army, and others. Rama will soon kill Ravan and return to Ayodhya with Sita and Lakshman, well and happy.”

Bharatji was astounded to hear Guruji’s words. He had never imagined that Rama was the sakshat Paramatma. He thought of Rama only as his beloved elder brother. In prema, the Ishwara-buddhi and drishti of aishwarya are totally absent.

Bharat’s eyes brightened with wonder. He came to Ramachandra and said, “Maharaj, please give the paduka of Your charan. I will do seva of Your slippers and the Rajya will be ruled by their aagna.”’

Had Bharat accepted the Rajya for even a single day, the Rajya would have become unfit for Rama, like jootha food, party partaken by somebody else. It is not suitable that an elder brother rules a Kingdom that is first ruled by a younger brother. This is why Bharatji had decided from the very first that he would not accept the Rajya. If Bhagwan did not sit on the throne of Ayodhya, His padukas would.

Bhagwan's padukas were divya. Bharatji would ask them what to do about all the matters, large and small, and get answers, and do what the padukas told him to do.

'Bharat did Ramachandra's parikrama, and did pranam. His voice was husky with emotion when he told Ramachandra, "please keep one thing in mind: if You don't come to Ayodhya on the very first day after the fourteen-year vanavas is over, I will walk into a raging fire."

Rama responded by saying, "*baadham* - I accept this. I will definitely come on the first day."

Bharatji made the preparations to leave for Ayodhya, along with the army, Ministers, Bramins, and Matas. Kaikeyi met Ramachandra when He was alone. Tears flowed down her face as she folded her hands and said, "He Rama! I placed an obstacle in Your Rajya. My buddhi had become wicked. I was deluded by Maya. Please forgive my wickedness, because forgiveness is the essence of a Sadhu's jeevan.

Kritam mayaa dushtadhiyaa maayaamohitaache`tasaa,

kshamasva mama dauraattmyam kshamaasaaraa hi saadhavah. 9. 56

Tvam saakshaadvishnuavyakttah paramaatmaa sanaatanah,

maayaamanusharoope`na mohayasyakhilam jagat,

tvayaiva pre`rito lokah kurute` saadhvasaadhu vaa. 9. 57

Tvadadheenamidam vishvamasvatantra karoti kim,

yathaa kritrimanartakyo nrityanti kuhake`chchhayaa. 9. 58

Tvadadheenaa tathaa maayaa nartakee bahuroopinee,

tvayaiva pre`ritaaham cha de`vakaaryam karishyataa. 9. 59

Paapishtham paapamanasaa karmaacharamarindam,

adya prateetoasi mama de`vaanaamapyagocharah. 9. 60

Paahi vishve`shvaraananta jagannaath namoastu te`,

chhindhi sne`hamayam paasham putravittaadigocharam. 9. 61

Tvajgnaanaanalakhange`na tvaamaham sharanam gataa,

kaike`yyaa vachanam shrutvaa raamah sasmitamabraveet. 9. 62

Yadaaha maam mahaabhaage` naanritam satyame`va tat,

mayaiva pre`ritaa vaanee tava vaktraadvinirgataa. 9. 63

De`vakaaraarthasiddhyarthtamatra doshah kutastava,

gachha tvam hridi maam nityam bhaavayantee divaanisham. 9. 64

Kshamaasaaraa hi saadhavah – You are sakshat Vishnu, the avyakta sanatana Paramatma. You are deluding this world with this manushya form You have assumed with the help of Your Maya. It is only by Your inspiration that a manushya behaves like a Sadhu or an asadhu; does good or bad deeds.

Sa e`va saadhu karma kaaryate` yam unmeeshayate`.

When Bhagwan wants to lift someonebody on to His lap, He first inspires the person to take a bath and cleanse himself. He prompts that person to do good deeds. This entire world is controlled by You; it is not independent. Just as a puppet dances at the strings pulled by the puppet-master, this Maya dances at the strings pulled by Your hands, and assumes many forms.

It was Your inspiration, Rama, that this paapi mana of mine wanted to do the work of the Devtas. I did this wickedness at Your prompting. Now I have the vishvas that You are the Paramatma who is not known fully by even the great Devtas. He Vishwatma! You are the Ishwara of this whole vishwa. He Anant! You are infinite! He Jagannath! You are the Master of this whole jagat. I bow down to You. Please remove the shackles of my attachment that Bharat is my son, Shatrughna is the follower of my son, this Rajya is mine, and this wealth is mine. Please severe these bonds with the flaming sword of Gnan. I have come in Your sharan."

Ramachandra smiled when He heard Kaikeyi's words. He said, "Mahabhaga – you are blessed. Everything you have said is satya; you have not said anything that is not true. It is a fact that your vani was inspired by Me, for the prupose of doing the work of the Devtas – *atra doshah kutastava* – where is your dosha in this? Now, go back to Ayodhya and have bhakti for Me. Do My dhyana day and night. Don't have attachment for anybody else in this world. My bhakti will make you Mukta within a short time."

Sarvatra vigatasne`haa madbhaktyaa mokshase`achiraat,

aham sarvatra samadrig dve`shyo vaa priya e`va vaa. 9. 65

Naasti me` kalpakasye`va bhjatoanubhajaamyaham,

manmaayaamohitadhiyo maamamba manujaakritim. 9. 66

Sukhadukhaadyanugatam jaananti na tu tattvatah,

drishtyaa madgocharam gnaanmutpannam te` bhavaapaham. 9. 67

Smarantee tishtha bhavane` lipyase` na cha karmabhih,

ityuktvaa saa parikramya raamam saanandavismayaa. 9. 68

Pranamya shatasho bhomau yayau ge`ham mudaanvitaa,

bharatastu sahaamaatyaimaantribhirgurunaa saha. 9. 69

Ayodhyaamagamachchheeghram raamame`vaanuchintayan,

paurajaanapadaan sarvaanayodhyaayaamudaaradheeh. 9. 70

Sthaapaayitvaa yathaanyaayam nandigraamam yayau svayam,

tatra sinhaasane` nityam paaduke` sthaapya bhakttitah. 9. 71

Poojayitvaa yathaa raamam gandhapushpaakshataadibhih,

raajopachaarairakhilaih pratyaham niyatavratah. 9. 72

Falamoolaashano daanto jataavalkaladhaarakah,

adhahshaayee brahachaaree shatrughnasahitastadaa. 9. 73

Raajakaaryaani sarvaani yaavanti prithiveetale`,
taani paadukayoh samyagnive`dayati raaghavah. 9. 74
Ganayan divasaane`va raamaagamanakaankshayaa,
sthito raamaarpitamanaah saakshaadvahyamuniryathaa. 9. 75
Raamastu chitrakootaadrau vasanmunibhiraavritah,
seetayaa lakshmane`naapi kinchitkaalamupaavasat. 9. 76
Naagaraashcha sadaa yaanti raamadarshanalaalasaah,
chitrakootsthitam gnaatvaa seetayaa lakshmane`na cha. 9. 77
Drishtvaa tajjanasambaagham raamastatyaaja tam girim,
dandakaaranyagamane` kaaryamapyanuchintayan. 9. 78
Anvagaatseetayaa bhraatraa hyatre`raashramamuttamam,
sarvatra sukhasamvaasam janasambaadhavarjitam. 9. 79
Gatvaa munimupaaseenam bhaasayantam tapovanam
dandavatpranipatyaaha raamoahamabhivaadaye`. 9. 80
Pituraagnaam puraskritya dandakaanananamaagatah,
vanavaasamishe`naapi dhanyoaham darshanaattava. 9. 81
Shrutvaa raamasya vachanam raamam gnaatvaa harim param,
poojayaamaasa vidhivadbhaktyaa paramayaa munih. 9. 82
Vanyaih falaih kritaatithyamupavishtam raghoottamam,
seetaam cha lakshmanam chaiva santushto vaakyamabraveet. 9. 83
Bhaaryaa me`ateeva samvriddhaa hyanasooye`ti vishrutaa,
tapashcharantee suchiram dharmagnaa dharmavatsalaa. 9. 84
Antastishthati taam seetaa pashyatvarinishoodana,
tathe`ti jaanakeem praaha raamo raajeevalochanah. 9. 85

Gachchha de`veem namaskritya sheeghrame`hi punah shubhe`,

tathe`ti raamavachanam seetaa chaapi tathaakarot. 9. 86

Dandavatpatitaamagre` seetaam drishvaatihrishtadheeh,

anasooyaa samaalingya vatse` seete`ti saadaram. 9. 87

Divye` dadau kundale` dve` nirmite` vishvakarmanaa,

dukoole` dve` dadau tasyai nirmale` bhakttisanyutaa. 9. 88

Angaraagam cha seetaayai dadau divyam shubhaananaa,

na tyakshyate`angaraage`na shobhaa tvaam kamalaanane`. 9. 89

Paativratyam puraskritya raamamanve`hi jaanaki,

kushalee raaghavo yaatu tvayaa saha punargriham. 9. 90

Bhojayitvaa yathaanyaayam raamam seetaasamanvitam,

lakshmanam cha tadaa raamam punah praaha kritaanjalih. 9. 91

Raama tvame`va bhuvanaani vidhaaya te`sham sanrakshanaaya suramaanushatiryagaadeen,

de`haanbibharsha na cha de`hagunairviliptastvatto bibhe`tyakhilamohakaree cha mayaa. 9. 92

Rama told Kaikeyi “I am samadarshi. I have equal goodwill for all. There is nobody I hate and nobody I love. A magician presents his magic show without prejudice or partiality for the things he uses. Everything is a part of his show. Just as an author who writes a book or a play using his imagination to create the characters without aversion or attachment for any of them, I have neither prema nor dvesha anybody. I do bhajan of those who do My bhakti.

Deluded by My Maya, people believe Me to be just another manushya, thinking, ‘Rama is sukhi’, or, ‘Rama is dukhi’. The fact is, I feel neither sukha nor dukha.

Mataji, it is a matter of good fortune that the Gnan of My swarup has risen in you. This sansara-sagar is given up when a person gets this Gnan. This world is not what we believe it to be; its real swarup is quite different. Stay at home, doing My smaran. You will not be bound by karmas."

Kaikeyi felt wonder and anand. She did Ramji's parikrama and put her head at His feet. Then she returned to Ayodhya with the others. It is impossible for anyone to be unhappy when they come into contact with Rama!

When Bharat went back to Ayodhya he did the chintan of Rama. He made arrangements for everybody to live comfortably without prejudice or partiality. He went to Nandigram and lovingly established Bhagwan's padukas on the Royal throne. He did their puja with akshat, flowers, etc. as is done for the Raja. Every morning he bowed down to the padukas and did puja of them as though they were Rama Himself.

Bharatji ate only fruits, roots etc, the food that Rama, Sita and Lakshman would be having in the van. His indriyas were restrained. He wore valkal garments. His hair was tied in a jata. He sat and slept in a hollow dug into the ground. "Ramachandra places His feet on the ground and walks; how can I, His sevak, do the same?" he thought.

Bharatji placed every matter of the Rajya to the padukas and followed the instructions given by them. He counted the days for Ramachandra's return. His mana was completely dedicated to Rama. His lifestyle was that of a Brahm-Rishi.

Ramachandra stayed at Chitrakoot, among the many Munis who lived there. However, people from Ayodhya kept coming for His darshan, and He felt that this was becoming a nuisance for the Munis doing tapasya. So, He left Chitrakoot Parvat. Another reason was that He felt that His purpose whould be achieved if He went to the Dandakaranya.

Rama, Sita, and Lakshman went to the Ashram of Atri Rishi. The surroundings were such that anybody could sit under one of the trees

and experience great anand. It was a secluded place. Bhagwan Rama, Sita and Lakshman reached the Ashram and did Atri Muni's darshan. Atri Muni was immersed in dhyana. The effulgence that his shareer emitted brightened the whole place.'

You will observe that in some places Bhagwan Rama first sent word of His coming, and the Muni came out to welcome Him. In some places, the Munis came out on their own. In some places Bhagwan saw the Munis doing bhajan with great anand.

'Bhagwan Rama said, "I am Rama, the son of Raja Dashrath. I bow down to you." He did dandavat pranam to Atriji. "I have come to the Dandak in obedience to My pitaji's aagna. Even though I have come with the excuse of vanavas, I have obtained your darshan. I am blessed!"

Hearing Ramachandra's voice Atriji emerged from his dhayan. He saw that sakshat Bhagwan was standing before him. He welcomed Ramachandra with great prema, and did His puja with the full ritual. He offered fruits and hospitality to them. With great pleasure he told Sitaji, "my patni is very aged. She is known as the pativrata-patni Anasuya. She has been doing tapasya for ages. She knows the essence of Dharma; she observes her Dharma at all times. She lives in that hut. Let Sitaji go and do her darshan."

Anasuyaji was so aged that she was unable to come and do Shri Rama-Sita's darshan.'

You can say that Anasuyaji had such staunch nishtha for the Smarta Dharma that she did not like to come out of her hut even for the darshan of Ramachandra Bhagwan even when He came to their Ashram!

'Ramachandra Bhagwan said, "Tathastu." Sitaji would not have gone into Anasyuaji's hut without Ramachandra's approval. Bhagwan Rama told her, "go to Deviji, touch her feet, and come back quickly."'

The word *sheeghrame`tu* used by Ramachandra indicates that Sitaji was reluctant to go without Ramachandra. The influence of her pativrata Dharma was strong in her, but she went when Ramachandra gave her the aagna to go.

'Sitaji went and did dandavat pranam to Anasuyaji – *danda vatpatitaamagre`.'*

Some people are of the opinon that women should not do dandavat pranam, but here, Sitaji did dandavat pranam to Anasuyaji.

'Anasuyaji was very pleased to see Sitaji. She said, "Beti! Beti!" and embraced her. She gave her dangling ear rings that bestowed good fortune on the wearer, ensuring that no misfortune would come to her. They had been crafted by Vishwakarma. She also gave Sitaji two saris - *dukoole` dve`* - that would never become dirty. They did not need to be washed because they always remained clean and pure. She gave divine unguents that would not get washed off and retain their quality.

"Your shobha will never leave you," she told Sitaji. "He Janaki! Follow Rama, keeping your pativrata Dharma. I give you the ashirvad that Ramachandra will go back to His palace with you, well and happy, in every way." Then she arranged for a meal for Rama, Lakshman and Sita.'

The word 'Atri' means a person who has evolved beyond the influence of the three gunas of Sattva, Raja and Tama, and lives in this world. Etymology has rhe name of Atri Bhagwan. Atri – meaning, *atraiva iti atri* – he, who always stays here, and in whom the three gunas are absent. The Devtas of the three gunas are Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. They are the sons of Atri and Aansuya.

Anasuya means a person who is free of the dosha of *asooyaa*, the bad habit of seeing faults in people. She is *paragune`shudoshaavishkaranamI* – if a person says a hundred words correctly but one word wrong, people will point out the mistake. This

tendency is called *asooyaa*. A person who is free of this tendency is called *anasooyaa*.

'Atriji said, "Rama! It is You who created this whole srishti. In order to sustain it, You take on the form of a Devta, a manushya, an animal, or a bird. You are not stained by the gunas of the deha You assume."'

The Paramatma's complete disassociation with His creation cannot be established by any other method. He is present as the one in all shareers. If it were to be said that He has only one form – Krishna, Shiva, or Vishnu – then, the Satya that the Parameshwara is not associated with any form cannot be established. It cannot be established that He is nirguna.

And, if it is said that there is no akara in the Parameshwara, then He will have the akara of being nirakara; He will become separate from the whole world, not related in any way to this world.

The Parameshwars is the *upaadaana kaarana* of this world; meaning, He is the substance of which this world is made. He is present in all the akaras; so, He is sakara. In spite of being present in all the akaras, He is not affected by any akara. This is the amazing quality of the Paramatma. This is something that is not found in any other majhab in the world.

This Maya deludes the whole world. It is an obstacle for a person who aspires to go to the Parameshwara.

The fact is that the separateness of the names and forms of which this world is made, is Maya. One Mahatma had whispered in my ear, that he was telling me something of great importance. 'Do you know what Maya is?' he asked.

'No, Baba,' I said. 'I don't know.'

'Maya means our mana,' he explained. 'It is this mana of ours that puts us into the confusion and delusion of this world. It turns us away from the Ishwara. It tells us that someone is good and someone is bad,

arousing raaga-dvesha in our thinking. It traps us in some things, and pushes us away from some things. Bhagwan's Maya means, the mana seated in our shareer. It is the cause of agitation and delusion of the mind, of Dharma, karma, paapa-punya, janma-maran, sukha-dukha, etc. A person sees things as shown by Maya. A person who becomes asanga from his mana is the one who reaches the Paramartha.

The Ayodhya Kand concludes here.

Aranya Kanda

The First Sarga

The killing of Viradh.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Atha tatra dinam sthitvaa prabhaate` raghunandanah,

snaatvaa munim samaamantrya prayaanaayopachakrame`. 1. 1

Mune` gachcchaamahe` sarve` munamandalamanditam,

vipinam dandakam yatra tvamaagnaatumihaarhasi. 1. 2

Maargapradarshanaarthaaya shishyaanaagnaptumarhasi,

shrutvaa raamasya vachanam prahasyaatrirmahaayashaah,

praaha tatra raghushre`shtham raama raama suraashaya. 1. 3

Sarvasya maargadrashtaa tvam tava ko maargadarshakah,

tathaapi darshayishanti tava lokaanusaarinah. 1. 4

Iti shishyaansamaadishya svayam kinchittamanvagaat,

Raame`na vaaritah preetyaa atrih svabhavanam yayau. 1. 5

'Shri Ramachandra Bhagwan, Sita, and Lakshman spent that night at Atri Muni's Ashram. Early next morning they bathed and got ready to leave after doing nitya karmas like Sandhya Vandan.'

Nitya karma means, the ordained daily tasks that should be done all lifelong.

'Rama asked Atri Muni's permission to leave. He said, "Maharaj, we are going to the Dandakaranya, where many Munis live. Please give us your permission to go."'

Whenever anything important is to be done we should first take the aagna of an elder. What am I to tell you? I had read a book belonging to a Muslim Fakir. It explained that is a manushya does something

good at his own inclination he is responsible for his action. If it is a good action he gets abhiman and if the action is bad he feels ashamed. However, if he takes the aagna of an elder before doing something he won't feel abhiman for doing a good deed, or shame for doing something bad, because the responsibility of the action won't be his.

The way to protect yourself from getting besmirched by your karmas is to not do anything important in haste, at your own inclination. A manushya should do karmas with the aagna of the Shastras, Guru, or an elder.

One point, given right at the start, is something that may be interpreted in the wrong way of spoken of openly. It is said that a punya that is done can become a cause of bandhan or ahankara, but a paapa done with the aagna of a senior does not become a paapa if the responsibility of the karma is not yours, because you have taken permission from a senior.

Those whose sanskaras are not based on the Shastras believe that it is the object, karma, or individual that is the most important factor. Actually, everything in this world is Maya, or it is the Paramatma, or it is the five elements – the pancha bhoota. There is no difference in the objects; the vastu is one. A manushya whose jeevan is based on aagna uses the method for becoming free of the sansara. A manushya whose jeevan is based on his own mana is binding himself to the sansara.

'Shri Ramachandra took Atriji's aagna before embarking on this journey. He requested Atriji to tell his students to show them the path.'

The meaning of this is that we should go on the path that is shown to us by a competent well-wisher. We should not blunder on unknown paths.

'Atri Muni smiled when he heard this. "Rama," he said, "it is You who shows the path to everybody! You are the one who sees all the paths – who can show the path to You – *tava ko maargadarshakah?*

However, since You wish it, I will ask my students to show You the path as perceived by this world." He gave his shishyas the aagna, and walked with them for a bit.'

Regarding this, the Manu Smriti says that it is the etiquette that when somebody comes, we should get up and go forth in welcome. When they leave we should walk a little distance with them.

Aagatam svaagatam kuryaat – welcome people when they come. And, *gachchhakah prishthaatoanviyaat* – walk some distance with them, when they leave. However, this is not the Dharma for a Sanyasis. According to Manuji a Sanyasi should neither ask anybody to come, nor tell them to go; not even tell them to stay on. A Sanyasi should have indifference for all three. If their presence is not conducive to him he can go away to some other place. He is free to leave, but he is not free to call, or send away, or ask anyone to stay.

I had gone to a Mahatma who lived in the ruins of an old house. The whole place was covered with dust. Cobwebs hung everywhere. There was a wasp's next at the broken window. I offered to clean up the place for him. He declined.

'Look', he said, 'I understand that this house is not mine, but these insects consider it to be their home. They have a feeling of possessiveness for it, and therefore, their right to this place is greater than mine. Let them be. I have no attachment and no right to this place.'

This is the difference between a Sanyasi and a Vanaprastha and a Grihastha.

'Atriji lived with his wife, so his behaviour with Ramji was with an Ishwara-buddhi. Ramachandra protested, "No, please don't come any further with Me," and made him turn back.

Koshamaatram tato gatvaa dadarsha mahateem nadeem,

atre`h shishyaanuvaache`dam raamo raajeevalochanah. 1. 6

Nadyaah santarane` kashchidupaayo vidyate` na vaa,

oochuste` vidyate` naukaa sudridhaa raghunandana. 1. 7

Taarayishyaamahe` yushmaanvayame`va kshanaadiha,

tato naavi samaaropya seetaam raaghavalakshmanau. 1. 8

Kshanaatsantaarayaamaasurnadeem munikumaarakaah,

raamaabhinanditaah sarve` jagmuratre`rathaashramam. 1. 9

Taave`tya vipinam ghoram jhilleejhankaaranaaditam,

Naanaamrigaganaakeernam singhavyaaghraadibhishanam. 1. 10

They came to a wide river after going about two miles or so. “Is there some way to go across the river?” asked Ramachandra.

“There is a very good boat,” answered to Brahmacharis. “We will row You across.” Rama, Sita and Lakshman got into the boat, and were taken across to the opposite bank. The Bramacharis then returned to Atri Muni’s Ashram.

Raakshasairghoraroopaishcha se`vitam romaharshanam,

pravishya vipinam ghoram raamo lakshmanamabraveet. 1. 11

Itah param prayatne`na gantavyam sahite`na me`,

dhanurgune`na sanyojya sharaanapi kare` dadhat. 1. 12

Agre` yaasyaamyaham pashchaattvamanve`hi dhanurdharah,

aavayormadhyagaa seetaa maaye`vaatmaraatmanoh. 1. 13

Chakshushchaaraya sarvatra drishtim rakshobhayam mahat,

vidyate` dandakaaranye` shrutapoorvamarindama. 1. 14

Rama, Sita and Lakshman entered the fearsome forest. The air was filled with the sound of insects, tigers, deer and Rakshasas. Ramachandra told Lakshman, “we have to be very watchful now. It is not that we need to kill anybody, but we must keep our dhanush

strung, ready, and baan ready in our hand. I will go in front, you came at the back and Janaki should walk in-between.”’

Brahma jeeva bicha maayaa jaise` - like Maya is in-between the Brahman and the jeeva.

‘”Aavayormadhyaa seetaa maaye`vaatmaparaatmano – just as Maya stays between the Atma and the Paramatma, keeping them separate, let Janaki walk in-between us. Walk with care, watching all sides. The fear of Rakshasas is great here, in the Dandakaranya. This is what I have heard.”

Itye`vam bhaashamaanau tau jagmatuh saardhyojanam,

tatraikaa pushkarinyaaste` kahvaarakumudotpalaih. 1. 15

Ambujaih sheetalode`na shobhamaanaa vyadrishyata,

tatsameepamatho gatvaa peetvaa tatsalilam shubham. 1. 16

Ooshuste` salilaabhyaashe` kshanam chhaayaamupaashritaah,

tato dadrishuraayaantam mahaasattvam bhayaanakam. 1. 17

Karaaladanshtravadam bheeshayantam svagarjitaih,

vaamaanse` nyastashoolaagragrathitaane`kamaanusham. 1. 18

Bhakshayantam gajavyaaghramahisham vanagocharam,

jyaaropitam dhanurghritvaa raamo lakshmanamabraveet. 1. 19

Pashya bhraatarmahaakaayo raakshasoayamupaagatah,

aayaatyabhimukham noagre` bheeroonaam bhayamaavahan. 1. 20

Sajjeevakritadhanustishtha maa bhairjanakanandini,

ityuktvaa baanamaadaaya sthito raama ivaachalah. 1. 21

Chatting in this manner, they walked several miles. They came to a lake filled with a variety of water lilies and lotuses. The water was cool and sweet. They drank deeply and quenched their thirst. All three felt

enthralled by the beauty of the scene before them. They sat under a tree to rest for a while.

They saw a large monster coming towards them. It had a horrible face with large fangs coming out of the mouth. Its roars were terrifying. It carried a strange multipronged spear on its left shoulder on which the heads of humans were spiked. The monster was picking them off one by one, and putting them into its mouth with great relish.

Ramachandra raised His dhanush. He told Lakshman, “look, My brother, a great Rakshasa is coming towards us. He would frighten any timorous person! Keep your dhanush-baan ready to shoot.”

To Janaki He said, “don’t be afraid.”

He stood firmly on the path of the approaching Rakshasa.

Sa tu drishtvaa ramaanaatham lakshmanam jaanakeem tadaa,

attahaasam tatah kritvaa bheeshayannidamabraveet. 1. 22

Kau yuvaam baanatooneerajataavalkaladhaarinau,

munive`shadharau baalau streesahaayau sudurmadau. 1. 23

Sundarau bata me` vaktrapravishtakavalopamau,

kimarthamaagatau ghoram vanam vyaalanishe`vitam. 1. 24

Shrutvaa rakshovacho raamah smyamaana uvaacha tam,

aham raamastvayam bhraataa lakshmano mama sammatah. 1. 25

E`shaa seetaa mama praanavallabhaa vayamaagataah,

pitrivaakyam puraskritya shikshanaartham bhavaadrishaam. 1. 26

The Rakshasa roared with laughter when he saw Bhagwan Rama, Lakshman and Janaki. He asked threateningly, ‘who are you? You have come in the garb of a Muni, wearing jata-valkal, but you have a dhanush-baan in your hand. You also have a woman with you. You are very beautiful to look at. You have come to me like a delectable morsel

of food. Why have you come to this van? This is where tigers, pythons and all kinds of dangerous creatures stay."

Ramachandra felt no fear. He smiled.'

It is Ramachandra's special quality that His smile never leaves His face, no matter how grave the situation. His opponents feel nervous to see Him smile, thinking of the power that makes Him fearless.

'"I am Rama," replied Ramachandra. "This is My brother Lakshman, who is very dear to Me. This is Sita, My beloved wife. We have come to the van at the aagna of My Pitaji. We have come to teach a lesson to you people – *shikshanaarthah."*

Shrutvaa tadraamavachanamattahaasamathaakarot,

vyaadaaya vaktram baahubhyaam shoolamaadaaya satvarah. 1. 27

Maam na jaanaasi raama tvam viraadham lokavishrutam,

madbhayaanmunayah sarve` tyaktvaa vanamito gataah. 1. 28

Yadi jeevitumichchhaasti tyaktvaa seetaam niraaudhau,

palaayatam na che`chchheeghram bhakshayaami yuvaamaham. 1. 29

Ityuktvaa raakshasah seetaamaadaatumabhidudruve`,

raamashchichchhe`da tadbaahoo share`na prahasanniva. 1. 30

Tatah krodhapareetaatmaa vyaadaaya vikatam mukham,

raamamabhyadravadraamashchichchhe`da paridhaavatah. 1. 31

Padadvayam viraadhasya dadadbhutamivaabhavat. 1. 32

Tatah sarpa ivaasye`na grasitum raamamaapatat,

tatoardhachandraakaare`na baane`naasya mahchchhirah. 1. 33

Chichchhe`da rudhiraudhe`na papaata dharaneetale`,

tatah seetaa samaalingya prashashansa raghoottamam. 1. 34

Tato dundubhayo ne`durdivi de`vagane`ritaah,

nanritushchaapsaraa hrishtaa jagurgandharkinnaraah. 1. 35

The Rakshasa began to guffaw even more loudly, opening his mouth wide. He lifted up his multipronged spear. “You don’t know that my name is Viradh!” he said. “I am famous all over the world! Many great Rishi-Munis have gone away from this van because of me. If you want to remain alive, throw down your weapons, leave Sita, and run away quickly! Otherwise, I will devour both of you!”

Viradh tried to catch Sitaji. Rama laughed and cut off both his arms with His baan. Viradh opened his mouth furiously, and rushed at Rama to devour Him. Rama cut off both his feet with His arrows. Viradh began to slither on the ground like a snake. Then, Rama used a baan with a head like a half-moon to cut off the Rakshasa’s enormous head. Viradh died, vomiting blood.

Sitaji embraced Ramachandra and praised Him. The Devtas began to beat their dundubhi – kettle drums – to rejoice. Apsaras danced. Gandharvas and Kinnars began to sing.

Viraadhakaayaadatisundaraakriti – rvibhraajamaano vimalaanbaraavritah,

prataptachaameekarachaarubhooshano vyadrishyaataagre` gagane` raviryathaa. 1. 36

Pranamya raamam prnataartihaarinam bhavapravaahoparamam ghrinaakaram,

pranamya bhooyah prananaama dandavat prapannasarvaartiharam prasannadheeh. 1. 37

A beautiful form emerged from Viradh’s shareer – *vibhraajamaano vimalaambaraavritah* – that shone brightly. The form was decked with golden ornaments that gleamed like the rising sun. The form bowed down to Rama.’

Now, people may ask what Dharma had Viradh done, to get sadgati, what bhakti he had done, what punya he had done, and who was the Rama to whom he did pranam.

The answer to this is – *pranataartiharam* – Rama is the one who removes the troubles of anyone who bows down to Him. His kripa breaks the stream of the sansara-sagar. He is the only treasury of compassion.

'The form did dandavat pranam again and again to Shri Ramachandra Bhagwan. He began to do Ramachandra's stuti joyfully.

Viradha uvaacha

Shreeraama raajeevadalaayataaksha vidyaadharoaham vimalaprakaashah,

durvaasasaakaaranakopamoortinaa shaptah puraa soadyavimochitastvayaa. 1. 38

Itah param tvachcharanaaravindayoh smritih sadaa me`astu bhavopashaantaye`,

tvannaamasankeertaname`va vaanee karotu me` karnaputam tvadeeyam. 1. 39

Kathaamritam paatu karadvayam te` paadaaravindaarchaname`va kuryaat,

shirashcha te` paadayugapranaamam karotu nityam bhavadeeyame`vam. 1. 40

Namastubhyam bhagavate` vishuddhagnaanamoortaye`,

aatmaaraamaaya raamaaya seetaaraamaaya ve`dhase`. 1. 41

Prapannam paahi maam raama yaasyaami tvadanugnayaa,

de`valokam raghushre`shtha maayaa maam maa vrinotu te`. 1. 42

Iti vignaapitaste`na prasanno raghunandanah,

dadau varam tadaa preeto viraadhaaya mahaamatih. 1. 43

"He lotus-eyed Shri Ramachandra! I am a Vidyadhara. You can see the pure effulgence of my shareer. Durvasaji had given me a shaap for no reason – he is the personification of wrath without cause!"'

Just as Bhagwan is an ocean of compassion without cause, Durvasaji is the image of anger without cause. When we accept the fact that some people are compassionate by nature we have to accept that some people are naturally bad-tempered. Neither needs a reason to be compassionate or to get angry.

'"You have released me from the shaap," said the luminous form. 'Please grant that I always think of Your charanaravinda. This gives shanti to our jeevan. Let my vani do sankirtan of Your naam continuously, and my ears drink in the amrita of Your katha. Let my jeevan pass in this manner."'

There is a shloka in the Bhagwat – *vaaneegunaanukathane`*…….Everything given in that shloka is given here, in two shlokas.

'"You are the murti of vishuddha Gnan, Bhagwan, I bow down to You. You are Atmaram, Rama, and Sita's Rama. You are the Vidhata who rules all beings. I have come to Your sharan. With Your permission I will go to the loka of the Devtas. Please give me the varadaan that Maya never catches me in her coils."

Gachhchha vidyaadharaashe`shamaayaadoshagunaa jitaah,

tvayaa maddarshanaasadyo muktto gnaanavataam varah. 1. 44

Madbhakttirdurlabhaa loke` jaataa che`nmukttidaayatah,

atastvam bhakttisampannah param yaahi maamaagnayaa. 1. 45

Raame`na rakshonidhanam sughoram shaapaadvimukttirvaradaaname`vam,

vidyaadharatvam punare`va labdham raamam grinanne`ti naroakhilaarthaan. 1. 46

Ramachandra felt pleased. He granted the varadaan at once. “You will conquer all the guna-dosha of Maya – *maayaadoshagunaa jitaah.* You have become Mukta because of getting My darshan. You have become a Gnani. All the gunas and all the doshas in the world are Maya’s. Those who are trapped in guna-dosha are trapped in this sansara. It is extremely difficult for anybody in this sansara to get My bhakti. My bhakti is now born in your hriday. Where bhakti comes, Mukti also comes. So, be filled with the treasure of My bhakti, and go on your way.”

Bhagwan Shri Ramachandra killed the terrible Rakshasa Viradh and released him from the shaap he had been given. Then He made him a Vidyadhar. A manushya who hums the name of Rama, sings about Him, does His kirtan and shravan, achieves all the Purusharthas. His every wish is fulfilled.

‘Raamam grinanne`ti naroakhilaarthaan.’

Aranya Kanda

The Second Sarga.

Meeting with Sharbhang, Sutikshna and other great Munis.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Viraadhe` svargate` raamo lakshmane`na cha seetayaa,

jagaama sharabhangasya drishtvaa raaman saumitrinaa saha. 2. 1

Sharabhangastato drishtvaa raamam saumitrinaa saha,

aayaantam seetayaa saardham sambhramaadutthitah sudheeh. 2. 2

Abhigamya susampoojya vishtare`shoopave`shayat,

aatithyamakorotte`sham kandamoolafalaadibhih. 2. 3

Preetyaaha sharabhangoapi raamam bhakttaparaayanam,

bahukaalamihaivaasam tapase` kritanishchayah. 2. 4

Tava sandarshanaakaankshee raama tvam parame`shvarah,

adya mattapasaa sidhham yatpunyam bahu vidyate`,

tatsarvam tava daasyaami tato mukttim vrajaamyaham. 2. 5

'Sita, Rama, and Lakshman went into the van of Sharbhang Muni after Viradh was killed. Sharbhang saw, "Sita, Rama, and Lakshman have come to my Ashram!" He got up at once and went forth to greet them. He asked them to be seated, and offered them edible roots and berries to eat.

"Maharaj," said Sharbhang Muni, "I have lived here for many years, doing tapasya. I had a yearning for Your darshan. It was in my heart that a considerable amount of punya has been accumulated by the tapasya I have done, and it should be offered up to You. Punya destroys paapa, but how can punya be destroyed? It has to be given away; it is a good thing. I wanted to give it to You as an offering. If I

offer up my punya to You, there will be no punya and no paapa left with me. I will become Mukta."'

This kind of Mukti is accepted by some Muktivadis.

'Sharbhang offered up all his punya to Bhagwan Rama's charanaravinda. He had great vairagya. He had no desire for the fruits of punya, which is Swarga or Vaikuntha.

Samparyam raamasya mahatsupunyafalam virakttah sharabhangayogee,

chitim samaarohayadaprame`yam raamam saseetam sahasaa pranamya. 2. 6

Dhyaayanshchiram raamamashe`shahrtstham doorvaadalashyaamalamambujaaksham,

cheeraambaram snigdhajataakalaapam seetaasahaayam sahalakshmanam tam. 2. 7

Ko vaa dayaaluh smritakaamadhe`nuranyo jagatyaam raghunaathakaadaho,

smrito mayaa nityamananyabhaajaa gnaatvaa smritim me` yaatah. 2. 8

Pashyatvidaaneem de`ve`sho raamo dasharathih prabhuh,

dagdhvaa svade`ham gachchhaami brahmalokamakalmashah. 2 9

Ayodhyaadhipatirme`astu hridaye` raaghavah sadaa,

yadvaamaanke` sthitaa seetaa me`ghasye`va tadillataa. 2. 10

Iti raamam chiram dhyaatvaa drishtvaa cha puratah sthitam,

prajvaalya sahasaa vahni dagdhvaa panchaatmakam vapuh. 2. 11

After saying this, Sharbhang Muni built a chita. He bowed down to Sita-Rama, who are aprameya, and immersed himself in the dhyana of Rama, with His boundless hriday, lotus-like eyes and shareer that has

a bluish hue like the durva grass, and wears a jata, is accompanied by Sita and Lakshman.

Meditating on Bhagwan's compassionate nature, on how He fulfils the desires of those who think of Him, who came to his Ashram to bestow kalyan on him.

"Now I will obtain His dham! May Rama, the Raja of Ayodhya, abide in my hriday always. Sitaji sits on His lap, on the left side, like a streak of lightening in the blue rain-clouds."

Doing dhyana in this way, Sharabhangaji lighted the chita and did homa of his shareer made of the pancha bhoota. He attained a divya deha and became a Raja of a divya loka.

Divyade`hadharah saakshhadyayau lokapate`h padam,

ato muniganaah sarve` dandakaaranyavaasinah,

aajagmoo raaghavam drashtum sharabhnganive`shaman. 2. 12

Drashtvaa munisamooham tam jaanakeeraamalakshmanaah,

prane`muh sahasaa bhoomau maayaamaanusharoopinah. 2. 13

Aashirbhirabhinandyaatha raamam sarvahridi sthitam,

Oochuh praanjalayah sarve` dhanurbaanadharam harim. 2. 14

Bhoome`rbhaaraavataaraaya jaatoasi brahmanaarthitah,

jaaneemastvaam hari lakshmeem jaanakeem lakshmanam tathaa. 2, 15

She`shaansham shankhachakre` dve` bharatam saanujam tathaa,

atashchaadau risheenaam tvam dukham mokttamihaarhasi. 2. 16

All the Munis who lived in the Dandakaranya came to get Bhagwan's darshan. Seeing them approach, Bhagwan Rama, Sita, and Lakshman bowed down to them with their heads touching the ground. The Rishis gave them whole-hearted ashirvad. They said, "Prabhu! You have

manifested at Brahmaji's prarthana, to remove the burden of the Prithivi. We know that You are Narayana, Janaki is Laxmi, and Lakshman is Shesha. Bharat and Shatrughna are Avatars of Your Shankha and Chakra. Your Shankha has manifested as Bharat and Your Chakra as Shatrughna.

Aagachchha yaamo munise`vitaani vanaani sarvaani raghoottama kramaat,

drashtum sumitraasutajaanakeebhyaam tadaa dayaasmaasu dridhaa bhavishyati. 2. 17

Iti vignaapito raamah kritaanjaliputairvibhuh,

jagaama munibhih saardham drashtum munivanaani sah. 2. 18

Dadarsha tatra patitaanyane`kaani shiraansi sah,

asthibhootaani sarvatra raamo vachanamabraveet. 2. 19

Astheeni ke`shame`taani kimartha patitaani vai,

tamoochurmunayo raama risheenaam mastakaani hi. 2. 20

Raakshasairbhikshitaaneesha pramattaanaam samaadhitah,

antaraayam muninaam te` pashyantoanucharanti hi. 2. 21

Shurtvaa vaakyam muninaam sa bhayadainyasamanvitam,

pratignaamakarodraamo badhaayaashe`sharakshasaam. 2. 22

Poojyamaanah sadaa tatra munibhirvanavaasibhih,

jaanakyaa sahito raamo lakshme`na samanvitah. 2. 23

Uvaasa katichittatra varshaanni raghunandanah,

e`vam krame`na sampashyannrisheenaamaasharamaanvibhuh. 2. 24

You have come to remove the dukha of us, Rishis."'

The point that Bharat and Shatrughna are Avatars is given several times in the 'Adhyatma Ramayana'.

‘”Prabhu! Come; go round with us in the van with Sita and Lakshman. When You listen carefully to our prarthana, Your compassion will be intensified.”

The Mahatmas took Rama, Sita, and Lakshman deeper into the van. They came to a place where human skulls lay in heaps, and there were piles of human bones. “These are the remains of the Rishis who were devoured by Rakshasas,” said the Rishis. “They were in Samadhi, unaware of the outside world, when the Rakshasas came and killed them. This danger is a big obstacle for the Rishis who want to go into a Samadhi.”’

In the same way, no Rakshasa can come near a manushya if he remains vigilant. If you keep yourself engrossed in Bhagwan’s dhyana-bhajan-puja-paatha, etc how will kama and krodha come into your mana?

Bharee saraaya raheema kee aapa pathika fira jaaya.

Rahim says that a traveller doesn’t even try to enter, when he sees that the roadside inn has no vacancy.

In the same way, if a man has prema for his wife, other women won’t even try to flirt with him. If a man’s heart is empty other people catch it and enslave him.

‘Listening to what the Rishis said, Bhagwan Ramachandra made a firm resolve. “I will kill these Asuras!” He declared. Bhagwan stayed with the Rishis for several years, going to their huts occasionally.

Suteekshnasyaashramam praagaatprakhyaatamrishisankulam,

sarvartugunasampannam sarvakaalasukhaavaham. 2. 25

Raamamaagatamaakarnya suteekshnah svayamaagatah,

Agastyashishyo raamasya mantropaasanatatparah,

vidhivatpoojayaamaasa bhaktyutkanthitalochanah. 2. 26

One day, Bhagwan went to Sutikshnaji’s Ashram.’

Goswami Tulsidasji has presented this episode with a description of Sutikshnaji going for Ramachandra's darshan. In the 'Adhyatma Ramayana' it is Bhagwan Rama who goes to his Ashram, accompanied by Sita and Lakshman.

'Everybody knew where Sutikshnaji's Ashram was. Many other Rishis had their huts close by. The place was conducive in every way for doing tapasya. Sutikshnaji saw, "Bhagwan Rama has, Himself, come to my Ashram!" He was filled with anand. Sutikshna was a shishya of Agastya Rishi, and the japa he did was of a Rama-mantra.

Sutikshnaji did Ramji's puja with the proper ritual. "Whoever gets Your bhakti gets mangal," he said.'

Bhakti means, to have prema for Bhagwan. There are two points in this. One point is that the mana is inclined only to Bhagwan and no other. The first task of prema is to draw back the focus from all other things, and develop vairagya from everything but Bhagwan.

The second point is that the mana meditates on Bhagwan's swarup, His svabhava, His gunas, etc, detaching it from everything but Bhagwan.

It is said that Sutikshnaji used to pester his Guruji, asking what Guru-dakshina he could give. One day, Agastyaji became impatient and said, 'What will you give me? Go – bring Bhagwan here! Let me get His darshan. What is there in this world that I can possible want, which you can give?

Sutikshnaji did pranam to his Guru. 'Very well, Maharaj,' he said. 'now, I will come only when I bring Bhagwan with me.' He went to his Ashram and began to do bhajan.

'Now, Bhagwan Himself came to Sutikshnaji's Ashram He said:

Suteekshna uvaacha

Tvanmantrajaapyahamanantagunaaprame`ya seetaapate` shivavirinchisamaashritaanghre`,

sansaarasindhutaranaamalapotapaada raamaabhiraama satatam tava daasadaasah. 2. 27

Maamadya sarvajagataamavigocharastvam tvanmaayayaa sutakalatragrihaandhakoope`,

magnam nireekshya malapudgalapindamohapaashaanubadhdhhahridayam svayamaagatoasi. 2. 28

Tvam sarvabhootahridaye`shu kritaalayoapi tvanmantrajaapyavimukhe`shu tanoshi maayaam,

tvanmantrasaadhanapare`shvapayaati maayaa se`vaanuroopafaladoasi yathaa maheepah. 2. 29

Vishvasya srishtilayasansthitihe`tukastvam maayayaa trigunayaa vidhireeshavishnoo,

bhaaseesha mohitadhiyaam vividhaakritistvam yadvadravih salilapaatragato hyane`ka. 2. 30

Pratyakshatoadya bhavatashcharanaaravindam pashyaami raama tamasah paratah sthitasya,

drigroopatastvamasataamavigocharoapi tvanmantrapootahridaye`shu sadaa prasannah. 2. 31

Sutikshna told Bhagwan Ramachandra, 'I do the japa of Your mantra, Maharaj. Your gunas are anant. You are Sita-pati. Your charanaravinda are the ashray of Shiva and Brahma. Whoever takes the sharan of Your charanaravinda crosses over this sansara-sagar. He Ramachandra! I am the dasa of Your dasa.

Your Maya puts us into a dark pit of putra, patni, and griha. People are not able to see You. I see people sinking in the sea of this sansara. This

shareer is a lump of dirty substances. We remain trapped in moha for this shareer.

You came, Yourself, to give darshan to me – what greater anugraha can I possibly get? Prabhu! You abide in the hriday of all beings. You spread Your Maya over those who don't do japa of Your mantra, but Maya runs away from those who do japa of Your mantra. You give people the fruit according to their seva.

You are the one and only cause of srishti, sthiti and pralay. It is You who creates Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva with the gunas of Your Maya. Today, I am getting the pratyaksha darshan of Your charanaravinda. Actually, You are the drashta – You are drig-swarup; You are vision itself! Who can get Your darshan? The dushta-durachari can never get Your darshan, but people whose hriday has become pavitra by doing Your japa attain Your kripa, and get Your darshan, because their hriday is always pure."

Pashyaami raama tava roopamaroopinoapi maayaavidambanakritam sumanushyave`sham,

kandarpakotisubhagam kamaneeyachaapabaanam dayaardrahridayam smitachaaruvaktram. 2. 32

Seetaasame`tamajinaambaramapraghrishyam saumitrinaa niyatase`vitapaadapadmam,

neelotpaladyutimanantagunam prashaantam madbhaagadhye`yamanisham pranamaami raamam. 2. 33

Jaanantu raama tava roopamashe`shade`shakaalaadyupaadhirahitam ghanachitprakaasham,

pratyakshatoadya mama gocharame`tade`va roopam vibhaatu hridaye` na param vikaankshe`. 2. 34

You have no roop, Prabhu, and yet I am doing the darshan of Your roop! You show Yourself as a manushya with the power of Your Maya; this is an irony! Your attractiveness cannot be matched by a million Kamadevas! You are holding a dhanush-baan. Your hriday is tender with compassion. A smile plays on Your lips. Sitaji is with You, Laxmiji, clad in a deerskin, doing seva of Your charanaravinda. Your shareer glows like a blue sapphire. Your gunas are anant!

If somebody wants to see my fortune, let him; my future good fortune stands before me in person! People who are Gnani know that Your swarup is free of the upadhis of desha, kaala etc. It is pure effulgence. I see You in front of me. Let this roop of Yours always be seen by me. I want nothing more."'

Pratyakshatoadyamama gocharametade`va roopam vibhaatu hridaye` na param vikaankshe`.

Goswamiji has described Sutikshnaji's *pre`ma-lakshanaa* bhakti that comes into this stuti emphatically. He has written that Sutikshnaji set out to meet Rama, but sat down on the way, lost in thoughts of Him. At times he was filled with horripilations of ecstasy and he forgot all about going.

Here it is described that Rama went to Sutikshnaji's Ashram.

You see, even in this, the factor of the difference in the Sampradaya comes in. This description is about Bhagwan's compassion in going to His bhakta's place. Goswamiji's description stresses on the prema of the bhakta, that when a bhakta has such intense bhakti Bhagwan goes, Himself, to him.

Itye`vam stuvatastasya raamah susmitamabraveet,

mune` jaanaami te` chittam nirmalam madupaasanaat. 2. 35

Atoahamaagato drashtum madrite` naanyasaadhanam,

manmantropaasakaa loke` maame`va sharanam gataah. 2. 36

Nirape`kshaa naanyagataaste`sham drishyoahamanvaham,

stotrame`tatpathe`dyastu tvatkritam matpriyam sadaa. 2. 37

Sadbhakttirme` bhave`ttasya gnaanam cha vimalam bhave`t,

tvam mamopaasanaade`va vimukttoaseeha sarvatah. 2. 38

De`haante` mama saayujyam lapsyase` naatra sanshayah,

gurum te` drashtumichchhaami hyagastyam muninaayakam,

kinchitkaalam tatra vastum mano me` tvarayatyalam. 2. 39

Suteekshnoapi tathe`tyaaha shvo gamishyasi raaghava,

ahamapyaagamishyaami chiraad drishti mahaamunih. 2. 40

Atha prabhaate` muninaa same`to raamah saseetah saha lakshmane`na,

agastyasambhaashanalolamaanasah shanairagastyaanujamandiram yayau. 2. 41

Bhagwan said, “Sutikshnaji! I know that your chitta has become nirmal by doing My upasana. That is why I have come here today, to get your darshan. I am always seen by people who come into My sharan, and have nishtha only for Me, asking for nothing else but Me.

This stotra you have spoken is very beautiful. Whoever does its paatha becomes dear to Me. He gets My bhakti and Gnan about Me.

You have become Mukti by doing My upasana. When this deha of yours is destroyed, you will get My sayujya – you will always stay close to Me.

He Sutikshna, I have come to you with a desire to get the darshan of your Guruji. It is My wish to stay at Agastyaji’s Ashram for some time. I want you to take Me to him tomorrow.”

Sutikshnaji said, “very well, Maharaj, that is very good. Please stay at my Ashram today. I will take You to Guruji’s Ashram tomorrow. I have got Your darshan after a long time!”

Bhagwan accepted Sutikshnaji’s hospitality and spent the night at his Ashram. The following morning they set out to first go to the Ashram of Agastyaji’s younger brother, Agnijivha Rishi.

Aranya Kanda

The Third Sarga

Meeting Munivar Agastyaji

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Ata raamah suteekshne`na jaanakyaa lakshmane`na cha,

agastyaanujasthaanam madhyaahne` samapadyata. 3. 1

Te`na sampoojitah samyagbhuktvaa moolafalaadikam,

pare`dyuh praatarutthaaya jagmuste`agastyamandalam. 3. 2

Sarvartufalapushpaadhym naanaamrigaanairyutam,

pakshisanghaishcha vividhairnaaditam nandanopamam. 3. 3

Brahmarshibhirde`varshibhih se`vitam munimandiraih,

sarvatoalankritam saakshaad brahmalokamivaaparam. 3. 4

Bahire`vaashramasyaatha sthitvaa raamoabrabeenmunim,

suteekshna gachchha tvam sheeghramaagatam maam nive`daya. 3. 5

Agastyamunivaryaaya seetayaa lakshmane`na cha,

mahaaprasaada ityuktvaa suteekshnah prarayau guroh. 3. 6

Aashramam tvarayaa tatra rishisanghasamaavritam,

upavishtam raamabhakttairvishe`shana samaayutam. 3. 7

Vyaakhyaataraamamantraarthashishye`bhyashchaatibhakttitah,

drishtvaagastyam munishre`shtham suteekshnah prayayau mune`h. 3. 8

Dandakavatpranipatyaaha vinayaavanatah sudheeh,

raamo daasharathirbrahman seetayaa lakshmane`na cha,

aagato darshanaarthaaya te` bahistishthati saanjalih. 3. 9

‘Agnijivha Rishi welcomed them warmly. Since it was noon he offered them roots, berries etc to Rama, Sita and Lakshman.’

Kanda is a tuber that has to be cooked, like a potato or sweet potato. Carrots etc can be eaten raw.

‘Agnijivha Rishi offered his guests all the different edible items he had. They stayed at his Ashram that night. Next morning they went to Agastya Muni’s Ashram.

Agastyaji’s Ashram was such that all kinds of fruits grew in every season! Many kinds of birds and animals lived there, as was evident from the sounds that could be heard. It was as though they had come to Nandanvan, Indra’s garden in Swarga. Brahmarshis and other Rishis lived close by.

Bhagwan Ramachandra went and stood at the door. He told Sutikshnaji, “go in and tell you Guruji that I have come.”

“Prabhu!” said Sutikshnaji, “You have done great kripa on me.” He went inside the hut. Agastyaji sat, surrounded by Ramachandra’s bhaktas.’

Agastya Muni is the most superior of the vaktas of Rama-katha. Agastya Muni had even gone to Swarga to do a katha for Indra. This is mentioned in the Uttar Kand of the Valmiki Ramayana. There is a book called the ‘Agastya Samhita’, which is included in the ‘Pancharatna Samhita’, which has a section called the ‘Kaushal Khand’. A very few copies of this were published recently in Ayodhya for only the vidvans, because it contains a description of Bhagwan Ramachandra’s secret leelas.

‘Agastya Muni is a great vakta of Rama-katha. He was giving a discourse when Sutikshnaji came to him and did pranam. He told his Guruji, “Maharaj, Sita, Rama and Lakshman have come for your darshan. They are standing at the door with folded hands, waiting for the moment when they will get your darshan.”’

This is exactly what Agastyaji had asked for, as Guru-dakshina, from Sutikshnaji. It was as though Sutikshnaji was bowing down and giving Guru-dakshina to Agastya Muni.

Agastya uvaacha

Sheeghramaanaya bhadram te` raamam mama hridi sthitam,

tame`va dhyaayamaanoaham kaankshamaanoatra sansthitah. 3. 10

Ityuktvaasvayamutthaaya munibhih sahito drutam,

abhyagaatparayaa bhakttyaa gatvaa raamamathaabraveet. 3. 11

Aagachchha raama bhadram te` drishtyaa te`adya samaagamah,

priyaatithirmama praaptoasyadya me` safalam dinam. 3. 12

'Agastyaji said, "bring them in quickly! They are seated in my hriday. I do their dhyana. I long for them." He stood up hastily and went to Ramachandra Bhagwan.

"Come, Rama, come!" he entreated. "Your darshan is possible only with great good fortune, with Your immense anugraha! You are my very dear atithi."'

Priyaatithirmama praaptasyadya me` safalam dinam.

There are occasions when the word *priya* is attached to the atithi; else there uninvited guests who arrive suddenly and the people wonder what food can they offer to the unexpected visitors!

'Agastya said, "my hriday's beloved atithi have come to my place after a very long time! This is truly the most fruitful day of my life!"

Raamoapi munimaayaanta drishtvaa harshamaakulah,

seetayaa lakshmane`naapi dandavatpatito bhuvi. 3. 13

Drutamutthhapya muniraadraamamaalingya bhakttitah,

tadgaatrasparshajaalhaadastravatre`nnajalaakulah. 3.14

Griheetvaa karame`ke`na kare`na raghunandanam,

jagaama svaashramam hrishto manasaa munipungavah. 3. 15

Sukhopavishtam sampoojya poojayaa bahuvistaram,

bhojayitvaa yathaanyaayam bhojyairvanyairane`kadhaa. 3. 16

Sukhopavishtame`kaante` raamam shashinibhaananam,

kritaanjaliruvaache`damagastyo bhagavaanrishih. 3. 17

Rama, Lakshman and Sita fell at Agastyaji's feet. He raised Rama up and embraced Him. The touch of Ramachandra's chest filled him with joy. Tears of happiness filled his eyes. He caught Ramachandra's hand and brought them inside. He made Him sit on an asana and offered an elaborate meal that included items that were found only in the van and not available in cities. Then he took Rama aside.

Tvadaagamaname`vaaham prateekshansamavasthitah,

yadaa ksheerasamudraante` brahmanaa praarthitah puraa. 3. 18

Bhoome`rbhaaraapanuttyartham raavanasya badhaaya cha,

tadaadi darshanaakaankshee tava raama tapashcharam,

vasaami munibhih saardham tvaame`va parichintayan. 3. 19

Srishte`h praage`ka e`vaaseernirvikalpoanupaadhikah,

tvadaashrayaa tvadvishayaa maayaa te` shakttiruchyate`. 3. 20

Tvaame`va nirgunam shakttiraavrinoti yadaa tadaa,

avyaakritamiti praahurve`daantaparinishthitaah. 3. 21

Then Rishi Agastya told Bhagwan Ramachandra, "Bhagwan! Ever since the day Brahma prayed to You at the shore of the Ksheerasagar to kill Ravana, I have stayed at this spot, waiting for You. I knew You will come by this route to kill Ravana and relieve Prithivi's burden.

There was one more reason for my staying here, which I will tell You a little later.

Before this srishti was created there was nothing but You. There was no upadhi of Maya. The superimposed objects are created first, because there is no method for calculating time if there is no srishti. And so, the kalpana is done of the state before the creation of the universe, and the former existence of the Paramatma. This, too, is an upadhi – a superimposition.

Therefore, Maharaj, You were *nirbhe`da* earlier; there was no separation in You, no upadhi, no kaala, and no desha.

Where were You? You were within Your Self! No east, no west, no north and no south; no outside and no inside.

When were You?

You were neither earlier nor later; neither before nor after.

Then?

From the viewpoint of the srishti, Bhagwan is said to exist before the srishti is created, in order to relate to the upadhi of the srishti.'

The svabhava of Maya is that she does not hide the one in whom she stays; she hides those she effects.

Jeevaashrayaa brahmavishayaa.

Those who agree with the 'Bhamati Prasthan' say that Maya stays in the jeeva and hides the Brahman. She makes the Brahman he ashray and hides Him and the jeeva is not able to understand her.

Where does Maya stay?

It is said that nothing exists but the Brahman. Maya is in the Brahman and the Brahman is her object.

In the opinion of the 'Vivaran Prasthan' the Atma is one, whether you call it the Brahman or the Atma – *brahmaashrayaa brahmavishayaa.* Maya is in the Brahman and about the Brahman.

The 'Bhamati Prasthan' does not agree with this. It says, 'no; Maya stays in the ashray of the jeeva and deludes the jeeva that is her ashray. She stays as avidya, deluding the jeeva who gives her refuge. As a result, the jeeva is not able to understand its own anant roop of being the Brahman.

The author of the 'Vivaran Prasthan' states that there is no duality. That, which is the Brahman, is the jeeva. Therefore, the vishay is also the ashray of the one whose ashray is the Brahman.

This is called 'shakti'. This shakti hides your nirguna swarup, and is called *avyaakrita* – something that is not analysed – before the naam-roop manifest, because we do vichar only when we are in the world of name and form.

What could have existed before the naam-roop appeared?

The kalpana of the beej of naam-roop is there, before thy manifest. It is called the formless avyakrita beej.

If we look at the Brahman there is no such thing as a beej; but if we look at this prapanch of naam-roop the beej is evident. That is why this is called *anirvachaneeya.* It is something that cannot be called Satya, nor can it be called asat. From the viewpoint of the Brahman it does not exist, and from the viewpoint of the jagat it cannot be dismissed as asat. It is *sadasadbhyaam anirvachaneeyaa.* This is why the Vedantis describe it as *praahurve`daantaparinishthitaah.*

Moolaprakritiritye`ke` praahurmaaye`ti ke`chana,

avidya sansritirbandha ityaadi bahudhochyate`. 3. 22

Tvayaa sankshobhyamaanaa saa mahattattvam prasooyate`,

mahattattvaadahankaarastvayaa sanchoditaadabhot. 3. 23

Ahankaaro mahattattvasanvritastrividhoabhavat,

saattviko raajasashchiva taamasashche`ti bhanyate`. 3. 24

Taamasaatsookshmatanmaatraanyaasan bhootaanyatah param,

sthoolaani kramasho raama kramottaragunaani ha. 3. 25

Raajasaaneendriyaanye`va saattvikaa de`vataa manah,

te`bhyoabhavatsootraroopam lingam sarvagatam mahat. 3. 26

Tato viraat samutpannah sthoolaad bhootakadambakaat,

viraajah purushaatsarvam jagatsthaavarajangamam. 3. 27

De`vatiryanmanushyaashcha kaalakarmakrame`na tu,

tvam rajogunato brahmaa jagatah sarvakaaranam. 3. 28

Sattvaadvishnustvame`vaasya paalakah sadbhiruchyate`,

laye` rudrastvame`vaasya tvanmaayaagunabhe`datah. 3, 29

Jaagritsvaprasushuptyaakhyaa vrittyo buddhijairgunaih,

taasaam vilakshano raama tvam saakshee chinmayoavyayah. 3. 30

Some people say that it is Mool-Prakriti – the power of Creation - some say it is avidya, some call it the sansmriti, and some call it bandhan. People call it by different names. It is from this that the Mahat-Tattva, Ahankara-Tattva and the three gunas – the Sattvik, the Rajasik, and the Tamasik – arise.

After this, the srishti – which is a mixture of these three gunas – is created. The pancha bhoota are a part of the Tamas srishti, and the Virat Purusha is in this.

This is how the kalpana of the entire srishti is done.

In this srishti, it is You who is Brahma when You Create. You are Vishnu when you sustain, and You are Rudra when everything is merged into You. It is You who is given these three names because of the upadhi

of Your actions. The vrittis of jagrit, svapna and sushupti are imagined by the gunas of the buddhi. The Atma is speared from them – *taasaam vilakshano raamah tvam saakshee chinmayoavyayah.* The jagrit avastha came and went, the svapna avastha came and went. Sushupti came and went. They are vrittis – a kind of behaviour that keeps coming and going. The conscious Atma in them is Rama's swarup.

Srishtileelaam yadaa kartumeehase` raghunandana,

angeekaroshi maayaam tvam tadaa vai gunavaaniva. 3. 31

Raama maayaa dvidhaa bhaati vidyaavidye`ti te` sadaa,

pravrittimaarganirataa avidyaavashavartinah,

nivrittimaarganirataa ve`daantaarthavichaarrakaah. 3. 32

Tvadbhakttinirataa ye` cha te` vaividyaamayaah smritaah,

avidyaavashagaa ye` tu nityam sansaarinashcha te`,

vidyaabhyaasaratаa ye` tu nityamukttaasta e`va hi. 3. 33

Loke` tvadbhakttinirataastvanmantropaasakaashcha ye`,

vidyaa praadurbhave`tte`sham ne`tare`shaam kadaachana. 3. 34

Atastvadbhakktisampannaa mukttaa e`va na sanshayah,

tvadbhaktyamritaheenaanaam mokshah svapne`api no bhave`t. 3. 35

Kim raama bahunoktte`na saaram kinchidbraveemi te`,

saadhusangatire`vaanna mokshahe`turudaaritaa. 3. 36

When Rama wants to do srishti-leela, He accepts Maya. Maya comes in two forms – vidya and avidya. The people who are inclined towards the pravritti marg – the path of activity, meaning, want to work to achieve something, become someone, attain something – in the inner world or the world outside, are controlled by avidya.

Those who are engrossed in Your bhakti are filed with vidya. But, those who are filled with avidya are sansari. People willed with vidya are

nitya-Mukta. Brahmavidya rises in the hriday of those, who – while living in the world do Your upasana; not in the hriday of other people. That is why we should consider those who have the wealth of Your bhakti to be Mukta. Mukti is bound to come when bhakti is in the hriday. Nobody can get Moksha even in his dreams unless he has bhakti in his hriday.

What is the use of elaborating further? There is only one karana of Moksha, and that is to associate with Sadhus.

Saadhusangatire`vaatra mokshahe`turudaahritaa.

Having been born in the manushya-loka, the only way to remove any kind of bandhan is Satsang; it is Sadhu-sangati.'

The fact is, when a manushya does vichar with his buddhi only, there is no analysis of the vasanas in his mana. His own vasanas influence his thinking without his being aware of it. That is why, instead of being shuddha vichar, the vichar is contaminated by the sanskaras of the things the manushya has heard, seen, experienced, read, etc. This is why it is important that a manushya should not rely on his own independent vichar; he should rely on what he has heard in the Satsang, and base his conclusions and behaviour on the guidance of the Sants.

That, which is on the side of being free of vasanas is the sadhan for Moksha.

Saadhavah samachittaa ye` nihsprihaa vigataishinah,

daantaah prashaantaastvadbhakttaa nivrittaakhilakaamanaah. 3. 37

Ishtapraaptivipattyoshcha samaah sangavivarjitaah,

sanyastaakhilakarmaanah sarvadaa brahmatatparaah. 3. 38

yamaadigunasampannaah santushtaa ye`na ke`nachit,

satsangamo bhave`dyarhi tvatkathaashravane` ratih. 3. 39

Samude`ti tato bhakttistvayi raama sanaatane`,

tvadbhakttaavupapannaayaam vignaanam vipulam sfutam. 3. 40

Ude`ti mukttimaargoayamaadyashchaturase`vitah,

tasmaadraaghava sadbhakttistvayi me` pre`malakshanaa. 3. 41

Sadaa bhooyaaddhare` sangastvadbhaktte`shu vishe`shatah,

adya me` safalam janma bhavatsandarshanaadabhoot. 3. 42

Who is a Sadhu?

A Sadhu is one who has universal benevolence. A person whose mana is sullied with considerations of mine-others', partiality-prejudice, good-will-ill-will, etc is not a Sadhu.

A Sadhu is *sama-chitta* – his outlook is always filled with equanimity. He desires nothing in this sansara. He has no expectations from anyone to serve him in any way.

Aishanaa means a strong desire for something we don't have. Dhana-aishana means a desire for wealth, putraishana means a desire for a son, and daaraishana means a desire for a wife. Vitteshana means a desire to earn lots of money, and the desire for the good things in this world and in the next, is called lokeshana. *Sprihaa* means the wish to keep what is yours.

A Sant is a person who is free from spriha – he is nispriha. He has no eshana. There is shanti in the hriday of a Sant. He has prema for Bhagwan, and is free of worldly or other-worldly desires. He has mental equilibrium whether the circumstances are favourable or adverse. He has no asakti of any kind. He has renounced the fruit of his karmas, offering them all to the Paramatma.

A Sant is always *bhramaparayana* – engrossed in the Brahman. Sadgunas like the five Yamas are present naturally in a Sant's jeevan. A Sant is satisfied with whatever happens – *santushto ye`na ke`na chit.* The Gita says, *'yadrichchhaalaabhasantushto dvandvaateeto*

vimatsarah'. A Sant remains content whether he gets any benefit or not. He is free of duality and is not hostile to any. The meaning of *santushtah* is that the person remains satisfied with whatever he gets to eat, drink, and wear, as given by his prarabdha.

Sabtushto ye`na kena chit means he always feels he is interacting with the Parameshwara, whether he plays with children, stroking some bird or animal, or talking to a tree.

What is the fruit of Satsang?

People think that if they shut their eyes tight and sit, the effulgence of Gnan will appear in the darkness. They are mistaken. This is not how the effulgence of Gnan appears.

The Tattva of Gnan is all-knowing and unchanging, without separation or differences. The durgunas and durachari that have come into it are the durgnan and durvichar that have seeped into it. They are the wrong kind of superimpositions on the Tattva.

Some right vichar has to be superimposed on them in order to remove the bad inclinations and bad influences, because superimposing of good tendencies is necessary to remove the bad ones.

At this point, there is a subtle difference of the saguna and the nirguna (the Ishwara with gunas, and the Brahman without gunas), which cannot be understood without Vedanta.

Had there been only saguna and nothing else, it is possible that it would manifest in the dark if you sit with your eyes shut. However, when both the saguna and the durgunas are superimposed on the nirguna, the adhyaropa of the sadguna has to be done to remove the durgunas. The principle of this subtle difference between the saguna and the nirguna cannot be understood by people in general.

The fact is that we should do Satsang. Satsang results in getting prema for Bhagwan's katha, and then we get Bhagwan's bhakti. When we get bhakti, all obstacles to our getting vignan are removed. The marg to

Mukti will open in our hriday. Therefore, the sad-bhakti, the prema-lakshana bhakti for Bhagwan Rama should come into our jeevan.

‘”And so, may Satsang come always, particularly for Your bhaktas. Today, my birth as a manushya is successful because I have got Your darshan.

Adya me` krittavah sarve` babhoovuh safalaah prabho,

deerghakaalam mayaa taptamananyamattinaa tapah,

tasye`ha tapaso raama falam tava yadarchanam. 3. 43

Sadaa me` seetayaa saardham hridaye` vasa raaghava,

gachchhatastishthato vaapi smritih syaanme` sadaa tvayi. 3. 44

My Yagnas are successfully accomplished today, and also my tapasya. The fruit of my tapasya is that You, Ramachandra, have come to my house. Please stay in my hriday, along with Sita and Lakshman. Whether I walk, stand still, or whatever my state may be, let my thoughts be filled with You.”

Iti stutvaa ramaanaathamagastyo munisattamah,

dadau chaapam mahe`ndre`na raamaarthe` sthaapitam puraa. 3. 45

Akshayau baanatooneerau khango ratnavibhooshitah,

jahi raaghava bhoobhaarabhootam raakshasamandalam. 3. 46

Yadarthamavateernoasi maayayaa manujaakritih,

ito yojanayugme` tu punyakaananamanditah. 3. 47

Asti panchavateenaamnaa aashramo gautameetate`,

ne`tavyastatra te` kaalah she`sho raghukulodvaha. 3. 48

Tatraiva bahukaaryaani de`vaanaam kuru satpate1. 3. 49

Shrutvaa tadaagastyasubhaashitam vachah stotram cha tattvaarthasamanvitam vibhuh,

munim samaabhaashya mudaanvito yayau pradarshitam maargamashe`shaviddharih. 3. 50

Agastya Muni did this stuti of Bhagwan Ramachandra. Then he told Him the main reason for having stayed on this road that he knew Ramachandra would come by. “Indra has given me Your great dhanush to keep ready for You. He told me that I should give it to You when You come by this route, on your way to kill Ravana.”

Indra had also given two divine quivers filled with arrows, which would never become empty no matter how many arrows were taken from them. Furthermore , he had given a gem-studded sword and one more dhanush, to be given to Ramachandra.

Agastyaji said, “Rama! Take these with You and kill these Rakshasas. This is the purpose of Your Avatar. You have assumed the form of a manushya with the aid of Your Maya.

Two yojans from here, there is a place called the Panchavati, beside the Godavari river. You should stay there for the remaining part of Your vanavas. You can stay there and do many things.”’

When Anasuyaji gave Sita the divine garments, ornaments, etc, Sitaji hesitated to take them. Atriji and Anasuyaji are Brahmins, whereas Ramachandra and Sita are Kshatriyas. It is wrong for a Kshatriya to take daan from a Brahmin. ‘How can I take this from a Brahmin?’ thought Sitaji. Anasuyaji gave her an upadesh. ‘Look, Sita, this is not a punya-daan; this is a prema-daan. You should accept a gift given with prema.’

Here, Agastyaji’s daan is a prayojan-daan; a gift given for serving a purpose. ‘The Devtas have given this for You, to achieve Your purpose,’ said Agastyaji. ‘They are keeping their drishti on You and helping You.’

‘Listening to this beautiful stotra and the words of Agastya Rishi, Ramachandra felt very pleased. This stotra is filled with Tattvagnan.

Ramachandra Bhagwan was immersed in paramananda. He took leave of Agastya Rishi and proceeded with Sita and Lakshman on the path the Rishi has shown.

Aranya Kanda

The Fourth Sarga

Living in the Panchavati; upadesh to Lakshman.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Maarge` vrajandadarshaartha shailashringamiva sthitam,

vriddham jataayursham raamah kime`taditi vismitah. 4. 1

Dhanuraanaya saumitre` raakshasoaym purah sthitah,

ityaaha lakshmanam raamo hanishyaamyrishibhakshakam. 4. 2

Tachchhrutvaa raamavachanam griddharaan bhayapeeditah,

Badhaarhoaham na te` raama pituste`aham priyah sakhaa. 4. 3

Jataayurnaama bhadram te` gridhhoaham priyakrittava. 4. 4

Panachavatyaamaham vatsye` tavaiva priyakaamyayaa,

mrigayaayaam kadaachittu prayaate` lakshmane`api cha. 4. 5

Seetaa janakakanyaa me` rakshitavyaa prayatnatah,

shrutvaa tadgriddhavachanam raamah sasne`hamabraveet. 4. 6

'When Shri Rama had gone some distance towards the Panchavati, they saw a huge creature, like a mountain peak, sitting on the path ahead. It was Jatayu, a very old giant vulture. Bhagwan Rama looked at him in wonder. "Lakshman," He said, "keep the dhanush-baan ready and give them to me. This may be one of the Rakshasas who devour the Rishis."'

There is a lesson in this episode. We should not assume anything. We should certainly be vigilant, but if anybody becomes suspicious without real cause, he makes a great mistake, even if it is Ramachandra Himself!

People have a tendency to assume things. They say, ‘we have come to this conclusion’ on mere conjecture. Conjecture is when a cause and its effect – for example, a fire and smoke – have been experienced in the past. Assumption is not accepted as proof by the Shastras. We see smoke, go closer, and if we see a fire from which the smoke rises, then, our assumption is correct. However, if there is no fire from which the smoke was rising, our conjecture was wrong. It was not an assumption based on a valid estimate; it is a false assumption.

Foolish people assume what another person has in mind, suspecting bad intentions. They become dukhi and make others dukhi. We should be careful before jumping to conclusions. What are unfounded assumptions worth?

‘Shri Ramachandra said told Lakshman to give Him His dhanush-baan. Jatayu was Griddharaj – the Raja of the Griddhas. However, he felt frightened when he heard Ramachandra asking for His dhanush-baan. He called out, “O Rama! I am not fit to be killed by You; I am Your Pitaji’s priya sakha. My name is Jatayu. I am sitting here, in the Panchavati, to be of service to You. I will try my best to protect Sita when You and Lakshman leave her alone at the Ashram and go into the van for some work.”

Ramachandra’s hriday was filled with prema for this aged Griddharaj. A few minutes earlier, He was thinking of killing him!

Saadhu griddha mahaaraaja tathaiva kuru me` priyam,

atraiva me` sameepastho naatidoore` vane` vasan. 4. 7

Ityaamantritamaalingya yayau panchavateem prabhuh,

lakshmane` saha bhraatraa seetayaa raghunandanah. 4. 8

Gatvaa te` gatameeteeram panchavatyaam suvistaram,

mandiram kaarayaamaasa lakshmane`na subuddhinaa. 4. 9

Tatra te` nyavasansarve` gangaayaa uttare` tate`,

kadambapanasaamraadifalavrikshasamaakule`. 4. 10

Vivikte` janasambaadhavarjite` neerujasthale`,

vinodayan janakajaam lakshmane`na vipashchitaa. 4. 11

Adhyuvaasa sukham raamo de`valoka ivaaparah,

kandamoolafalaadeeni lakshmanoanudinam tayoh. 4. 12

Aaneeya pradadau raamase`vaatatparamaanasah,

dhanurbaanadharo nityam raatrau jaagarti sarvatah. 4. 13

Bhagwan Ramachandra asked Jatayu to come closer, and embraced him. He went to the Panchavati with Sita and Lakshman. Lakshmanji built a beautiful hut on the bank of the Godavari for them to live in.'

Gangaajalamalpamapi aghabhidaanandaaya sanjaayate`.

Even a little water from the Godavari gives great anand and destroys paapa.

If other rivers are to be thought of, they are remembered by calling them 'Ganga'. This gives respect to the other river. However, you should not call Gangaji by the name of any other river. For example, it is not proper to say, 'this is the Saryu', or, 'this is the Yamuna' when you are with Gangaji.

'Panchavati was at an isolated spot that was filled with beautiful trees. Not many people came by there. *Neerujasthale`* - there was no illness in the atmosphere where Bhagwan's hut was built.

Shri Rama stayed there with Janaknandini and Lakshmanji. The days passed with laughter and peace. They were as happy as though they were living in Swarga. Lakshman brought kanda-mool-fala from the van every day. He was always engrossed in the seva of Shri Sita-Rama. At night he kept guard with his dhanush-baan on the ready.

Snaanam kurvantyanidinam trayaste` gautameejale`,

ubhayormadhyagaa seetaa kurute` cha gamaagamau. 4. 14

Aaneeya salilam nityam lakshmanah preetamaanasah,

se`vate`ahasahah preetyaa e`vamaasan sukham trayah. 4. 15

They took a bath in the Godavari every day. If Sitaji wanted to go somewhere, Ramachandra walked in front and Lakshman behind her. Lakshman filled water from the river every day with great prema. He did seva of Shri Sita-Rama night and day. The three of them lived in great sukha.

E`kadaa lakshmano raamame`kaante` samupasthitam,

vinayaavanato bhootvaa paprachchha parame`shvaran. 4. 16

Bhagvan shrotumichchhaami mokshasyaikaantikeem gatim,

tvattah kamalapatraaksha sankshe`paadvakttumarahsi. 4. 17

Gnaanam vignaanasahitam bhakttivairaagyabrinhitam,

aachakshva me` raghushre`shtha vakttaa naanyoasti bhootale`. 4. 18

One day, Ramachandra was sitting by Himself. Lakshmanji came to Him. He bowed down and asked Ramachandra a question.'

Tadvignaanaartham sa gurume`vaabhigachchhe`t – we should not indulge our ahankara. We should grasp the vignan of the Paramatma from our Guru. *Tadviddhi paripaate`na se`vayaa* – 'pranipat' means to bow down. We need to bow down, to reduce our ahankara. 'Prashna' means to ask question. We need to ask questions to get knowledge.

To ask questions is the bowing down of the buddhi. If you wish to establish your own opinion, you should never ask you Guru a question about it. There are people who become obdurate about their own convictions. Such people should not ask others' opinions.

To place a question to someone means the bowing down of your buddhi to their buddhi. To do namaskara means the bowing down of your shareer respectfully, and to do seva means the bowing down of

your karmas. When the karma, buddhi, and shareer are made to bow down before a senior it is called '*vinayyaavanta'.*

Gnan is a river of amrita that flows downwards. That is why the seat of the vakta is at a higher level than those who sit to listen to his upadesh. Just as the Gangaji emerges high up in the Himalaya and flows down to the sea, the vakta's Gnan flows down to the level of the shrotas.

'Shri Lakshmanji was vinayavanta when he asked Bhagwan Ramachandra, "Bhagwan, I wish to hear about the conclusion of Gnan from You. Please explain this to me in brief – *sankshe`paadvaktumarhasi.* He Raghunandan! Please describe this for me, because there is no other vakta like You on this earth – *vakttaa naanyoasi bhootale`.*

Tvadanyah sanshasyaasya chhe`ttaa na hyupapadyate` - nobody but You can cut away this doubt of mine."'

If the questioner has the feeling, 'if he doesn't tell me, I'll ask someone else; there are plenty of people who can tell me what I want to know', he will not have implicit faith the person he is asking. His desire for an answer will be half-hearted.

Actually, what does a manushya ask?

If a man asks, 'which work should I do?' he is at a certain level. If he asks, 'which mantra should I do japa of?' he is at another level. If he asks, 'how can I still my bhava?' his level is quite different, and if he asks, 'what is the Atma? What is the Paramatma? What is the relationship between the two? What is Mukti? Can Mukti attained only by Gnan?' it means he is at an altogether different spiritual level.

The levels of the questions are quite different. The level of the questioner's mana becomes evident as soon as he asks his question. The answer should be at the same level as the question. Unless this is

done, it will either be a waste of breath or end in a dispute. A Teacher has to consider this before answering.

Shreeraama uvaacha

Shrunu vakshyaami te` vatsa guhyaadguhyataram param,

yadvignaaya naro jahyaatsadyo vaikalpikam bhramam. 4. 11

Aadau maayaasvaroopam te` vakshyaami tadanantaram,

gnaanasya saadhanam pashchaajgnaanam vignaanasanyutam. 4. 20

Gne`yam cha paramaatmaanam yajgnaatvaa muchyate` bhayaat,

anaatmani shareeraadaavaatmabuddhistu yaa bhave`t. 4. 21

Saiva maayaa tayaivaasau sansaarah parikalpyate`,

roope` dve` nishchite` poorvam maayaayaah kulanandana. 4. 22

Vikshe`paavarane` tatra prathamam kalpaye`jjagat,

lingaadyabrahmaparyantam sthoolasookshmavibhe`datah. 4. 23

Aparam tvakhilam gnaanaroopamaavritya tishthati,

maayayaa kalpitam vishvam paramaatmani ke`vale`. 4. 24

'Rama said, "Vatsa Lakshman! I will tell you the greatest secret of all secrets."'

This is Bhagwan's *ardhaalee* - a half-shloka. *Yadvignaaya naro jahyaatsadyo vaikalpikam bhramam* – when this is known, a manushya immediately lets go of the bhram of duality. *Prakritihpurushah tasye`ti vikalpah purusharshabha* – there is the Prakriti and there is the Purusha. It is a vikalpa to know them as separate; it is an error.

The drishya is everything that is seen. Prakriti is the beej – the seed – of the drishya. The Purusha is the mool-Tattva of the Brahman. To know them as separate is to erroneous knowledge.

‘”Come; I will first tell you about the swarup of Maya at the very beginning. After that you can hear about Gnan, the sadhana of Gnan, and the vignan of Gnan.

Actually, nothing you ask about is worth knowing. The only thing worth knowing is the Paramatma.”’

Everybody knows what the Atma is. People say, ‘I (or my Atma) says ……’ Or, they say, ‘my Atma refuses to accept……’The meaning of ‘I’ is the Atma, which is separate in every shareer. It is the jeevatma.

In this, that which is the param – the supreme – is the Atma that is one an apart from all the shareers, is called the Paramatma. The Param-Atma is the swarup of all the seemingly separate Atmas. The separateness is external. The Atma is the supreme, non-dual swarup called the Paramatma, and is the actual swarup of the Atma.

What do you consider yourself to be when you do vichar? This is the mool-Prakriti. For example, you see a man with his eye at a microscope or a telescope. Unless he knows the magnifying power of the instrument, he will think that a sheep is the size of an elephant! He won’t even try to know how big a sheep actually is.

You would have noticed that when you see yourself in a mirror your left hand is on the right, and your right hand is on the left. Now, if you believe your left hand is towards the east and your left hand towards the west, you will believe the opposite of what is true.

An image reflected in water is even more incorrect. The head is below and the shareer is above! A person who knows that a reflection shows the opposite of what is, won’t get the bhram of believing the reflection to be a correct picture of the truth.

We have to understand that when we sit in a place, what we see is not necessarily what it seems. The buddhi cannot make the anant its vishay. We cannot see the Parameshwara with these upadhis; we have to experience Him by putting aside these upadhis before we can grasp

anything properly. A person who doesn't know this is very far from Vedanta-sang.

The first thing said by Vedantis is that the deha, and all the objects that are the anatma – meaning, not the Atma – are transient. Anybody who believes them to be real is caught in Maya and gets the sansara.

Maya also has two forms. One is vikshep and the other is avaran. Vikshep means the Maya that shows the prapanch. Avaran means the Maya that covers up and hides our anant swarup. These are the two shaktis of Maya. From the linga – meaning, the subtle body – to Brahma, this entire world of gross and subtle matter is imagined in Maya.

The vikshep shakti hides the truth.

Rajjau bhujangavad bhraantyaa vichaare` naasti kinchana,

shrooyate` drishyate` yadyatsmaryate` vaa naraih sadaa. 4. 25

Asade`va hi tatsarvam yathaa svapnamanorathau,

de`ha e`va hi sansaaravrikshamoolam dridham smritam. 4. 26

Just as people mistake a coiled rope to be a snake, Maya makes people imagine their jeevan within. A person who sits in his deha and does vichar cannot understand himself to be anything but a jeeva. He may think that he will merge into the Paramatma when he gets Mukti, because he is separate from the Paramatma as long as he is in this world. However, a manushya who established his Self as an individual will do the vichar, 'I am looking at the Brahman. I am seeing the Paramatma. This is Mukti. This is a jeeva.' Such a person doesn't have Gnan about the Paramatma.

The swarup of Gnan is hidden when a manushya believes his Self to be in a deha. The fact is, he is not only the antahkarana etc of one shareer; the entire prapanch is seen in the Paramatma, the way a snake is seen in a piece of rope.

All that is seen, heard, and remembered is said to be of some past experience, whether in a dream or during the waking state, whether false or real. All memories are objects of perception. That is why *smriti* – memory – is not accepted as praman.

Our memories are often too faulty to be relied upon. And so, whatever we hear, see, and remember is like a dream or a day-dream.

What we see, when we see, in which way, where, etc, should be accurate.

Oh my brother! You have not seen anything without the mana! Al your experiences have been through a mana embellished with your own sanskaras and vasanas. What vichar will you do through that mana?

That is why everything is like a dream. The root of the tree of this sansara is in this shareer. In the thirteenth chapter of the Gita, Bhagwan Krishna has done vichar of the Kshetra-Kshetragna – the shareer and the knower of the shareer. Here, Bhagwan Rama explains the same thing to Lakshman. There, it is Shri Krishna talking to Arjuna, and here, it is Shri Rama talking to Lakshman. This is not called the 'Rama Gita', it is called the 'Lakshman Gita.' The upadesh given in the Uttar Kand is called the 'Rama Gita.'

This upadesh is called the 'Lakshman Gita' because it is given for Lakshmanji.

Tanmoolah putradaaraadibandhah kim te`anyathaatmanah. 4. 27

De`hastu sthoolabhootaanaam pancha tanmaatrapanchakam,

ahankaarashcha buddhishcha indriyaani tathaa dasha. 4. 28

Chidaabhaaso manashchaiva moolapakritire`va cha,

e`tatkshe`tramiti gne`yam de`ha ityabhidheeyate`. 4. 29

E`tairvilakshano jeevah paramaatmaa niraamayah,

tasya jeevasya vignaane` saadhannanyapi me` shrunu. 4. 30

‘The bondages of son, wife, the attachment for the family, relatives and others is absolutely real in the world.

However, when it is real?

It is real when you consider your deha to be your ‘I’! If you don’t identify with your shareer, and realize that you are the shuddha Atma, no relationship remains for you.

How is this deha our ‘I’ anyway? The deha is composed of the pancha bhoota – prithivi, jala, agni, vayu and akash. The tanmatras of these are the shabda, sparsha, roop, rasa, and gandha. Then, the deha has ahankara, buddhi, indriyas, mana, chid-abhasa, and the mool-Prakriti. This is the *gne`ya kshe`tra* – the shareer, which is the field that is known.

A person who does vichar, and separates is ‘I’ from this kshetra gets Gnan.

Immature Vedantis also get confused about this.

Ear rings, rings, bangles, necklaces etc are separate objects, but the gold of which they are made is one. From the drishti of the Tattva, they are all gold. They are separate only from the drishti of vyavhar.

The dehee is the owner of the deha but the two are not separate. They are not different Tattvas. They are Advaita, but within the non-duality, the lakshan of the deha is different from the lakshan of the dehee who is the jeevatma. This difference, within the one Brahman, is given to explain how to discriminate between the absolute truth and the relative truth.

De`ha-de`hee-vibhaagoayamavive`kakritah puraa,

Jaativyakttivibhaagoayam yathaa vastuni kalpitah.

There is a difference between clay and a pot made of clay. Are they different or are they separate – is there a bheda or are they vilakshan?

That, which is clay, is also the pot. From the Tattva-drishti there is no difference in the clay and the pot.

The department of *jaati* - meaning group – and *vyakti* – meaning the individual – is different. One pot and a thousand pots are all imagined in the clay. There is a vilakshanta – a distinction – between a pot and clay, but it is not a vilakshanta of the Tattva, and therefore, the pot is not separate from the clay. The vilakshanta is in the name and form, not in the Tattva.

The fact is that the Atma is vilakshan from this srishti, but it is not separate from it. Separateness would be there if there were two Tattvas. Advaita cannot be established if the Tattvas are more than one; then, duality would be established.

E`tairvilakshano jeevah – the jeeva is vilakshan from the Kshetra, but is actually the Paramatma. It is *niraamaya* – free of ailments. It has not kind of paapa-punya, sukha-dukha, raaga-dvesha, etc that can cause suffering.

‘”Now, I will tell you the sadhan for obtaining the vignan of this jeeva-Tattva.”

Jeevashcha paramaatmaa cha paryaayo naatra bhe`dadheeh,

maanaabhaavastathaa dambhahinsaadiparivarjanam. 4. 31

Paraakshe`paadisahanam sarvatraavakrataa tathaa,

manovaakkaayasadbhakttyaa sadguroh parise`vanam. 4. 32

Baahyaabhyantarasanshuddhih sthirataa satkriyaadishu,

manovaakkayadandashcha vishaye`shu nireehataa. 4. 33

Nirahankaarataa janmajaraadyaalochanam,

asakttih sne`hashoonyatvam putradaaraasadhanaadishu. 4. 34

Ishtaanishaagame` nityam chittasya samataa tathaa,

Mayi sarvaatmake` raame` hyananyavishayaa matih. 4. 35

Janasambaadharahitashuddhade`shanishe`vanam,

praakritairjanasanghaishcha hyaratih sarvadaa bhave`t. 4. 36

Aatmagnaane` sadodyogo ve`daantaarthaavalokanam,

uttkaire`tairbhave`jgnaanam vipareetairviparyayah. 4. 37

Bhagwan Ramachandra said, "Look, Sir! The jeevatma and the Paramatma are synonyms."'

It is written in the Bhagwat: *se` e`va jeevo vivaraprasootih* – the jeeva means the Paramatma. They are the same thing.

The Gita says, *shareeram yad vaapnoti yachchaapyutkaamateeshvarah* – the jeeva is a synonym of the Paramatma.

That means, the Ishwara is the jeeva; it can be nothing else! It is just as a pot can be called a ghata or a kumbha, because these words mean the same thing. In the same way, *jeevayati satta sfurtayaa nikhilam jagat iti jeevah paramaatmaa* – the one who shows the jagat by giving it satta-sfurti is called a jeeva. Jeeva means the Paramatma. They are synonyms; they mean the same thing.

'"Don't have bheda-drishti for them – *naatra bhe`dadheeh."'*

How is that achieved?

'"It is done by giving up maan."'

Giving up maan means to give up the pride, or subtle ego, of individuality. You should give up maan and then investigate the Tattva. The Gita says – *nirmaanamohaajitasangadoshaa adhyatmanityaa* – if you hold on to your maan you won't be able to give up bheda-buddhi.

One day one Mahatma came to me. I was at Vrindavan. He sat on the ground and folded his hands. 'I have come with the hope of studying the Bhagwat from you,' he said. 'Please tutor me on the whole of the Bhagwat.'

He did not know that I knew him. I told him, 'I know that you are an Acharya of three or four Matas of our Shastras. You are a great vidvan. You can teach me – what can I teach you?'

At once he said, 'yes! I can also teach you some things.'

'Then, please don't sit on the ground. Please sit on a chair, beside me.'

The Mahatma got up and sat on a chair next to me. He started to talk about some subtle points from the Shastras. After a while he went away. Now, what was I to teach that Mahatma? If I tried to teach him anything he would say that he already knows this.

Gnan of the Tattva can only be obtained if you forget about the things you know, and forget the prapanch of name and form that has been superimposed on the Tattva.

A person has to understand, through tests in the laboratory, that the Tattva of all the separate ornaments is gold. If he believes that form the very beginning, what experiments will he do? He has to test the gold to remove his ignorance about the gold.

The first point is that Tattvagnan cannot be obtained if you have awareness and pride about your Gnan. Maan means measuring. If you believe yourself to be a shareer of three and a half arm-lengths, it is maan. The feeling of being a separate entity in any sphere – vidya, buddhi, vivek, smriti, dambha, himsa, etc is an obstacle to obtaining Tattvagnan. No person who indulges in any kind of artifice or hypocrisy will get Gnan; nor will anybody who gives dukha to another.

Tattvagnan can be obtained only by a person who gives up dambha, himsa etc and is free of maan. The fact is Tattvagnan is attained on the principle of giving up. Nothing remains, except the Paramatma. The Atma-Paramatma are not separate. When everything that can be given up is given up, that is when a person gets Atmagnan. The objects may be anything – give them whatever names you want. If somebody blames you for something, let him. Don't react in any way, mentally

or physically. Let your speech be straightforward. Sit straight. Don't talk with some hidden purpose in mind. If you need to explain the purport of what you say, it means that your vyavhar is at fault. Let there be nothing devious in what you say or do. To be devious is not the way to get Tattvagnan.

Have a constant straightforwardness of mind and behaviour. Endure blame. Serve your Sadguru lovingly with your mana, vani, and shareer, with bhakti for him. Maintain inner and outer shuddhi and remain steady in any karma you undertake. All these are essential. Your mana, vani and shareer must be under your control, and there should be complete indifference towards vishays. You should be free of ahankara, and not have any wish to discuss things like who is it that gets born.

The subject of why janma takes place is of a different department. If you ask why janma takes place, the answer given is that it is because of the individual's karmas.

From where did the karmas get the power to cause janma?

The power is because of the vasanas attached to the karmas.

Why does janma happen?

There is a sookshma shareer. It is the antahkarana that has to go from one place to another. That is a different subject.

This is the department of what is it that is born.

If it is the chetan, it will not change. It will not become jeeva-Shiva. Chetan will remain chetan. It will remain ajanma and ajara – there will be no birth and no decay for it., because the Tattva is ajanma and ajara.

If people, by their own manner, depending on their vasanas and sanskaras, believe that janma-maran is caused by adhyaropa – the superimpositions of sanskaras – then you should not have any asakti

for anything. There should be no attachment to anyone or anything – neither son, nor wealth, wife, nor anything else. Retain equanimity in your chitta, no matter what comes, whether it is favourable or not.

Furthermore, think, 'I am Rama – *mayi sarvaatmake` raame` hyananyavishayaa matih* – I am the Atma of all', and see Rama in everything. Stay in a secluded place that is shuddha. Avoid crowds. Avoid the company of people who talk about worldly matter all the time.

One man says, 'I am very hungry. I've not eaten anything today.' Just then a fly goes into his mouth and he vomits. Rice and dal come out in the vomit.

One man who said he was doing roja in the month of Ramzan went to bathe in the river. When he dipped under the water he would quickly gulp some water become coming out. He felt he was being very clever, that even Khuda didn't know that he was drinking water. One day, a small fish got stuck in his throat. He came out gasping for breath. People managed to extract the fist and he could breathe again. He said, 'today, Khuda has seen my cheating!'

A man vomits what he eats. When a manushya starts talking he exposes himself. The matter he has in his mind comes out in his talk in some form or other. Just as a person cannot see whether his vomit is soiling his clothes or the ground, people who have a habit of talking a lot expose their inner self. It is not good to spend time with such people if you are a sadhak. If you don't have any option, at least don't allow yourself to take any interest in what they say.

You should always strive to get Atmagnan, doing the chintan of the purport of Vedanta.

'Bhagwan Rama said, "if you live in this manner, you will obtain Gnan, but if you do the opposite your misapprehensions will increase.

Buddhipraanamanode`haahankritibhyo vilakshanah,

chidaatmaaham nityashuddho buddha e`ve`ti nichshayam. 4. 38

Ye`na gnaane`na sanvitte` tajgnaanam nishchitam cha me`,

vignaanam cha tadaivaitatsaakshaadanubhave`dyadaa. 4. 39

Aatmaa sarvatra poornah syaachchidaanandaatmakoavyayah,

buddhyaadyupaadhirahitah parinaamaadivarjitah. 4. 40

Svaprakaashe`na de`haadeen bhaasayatranapaavritah,

e`ka e`vaaadviteeyashcha satyagnaanaadilakshanah. 4. 41

Asangah svaprabho drashtaa vignaane`naavagamyate`,

aachaaryashaastropade`shaadyaikyagnaanam yadaa bhave`t. 4. 42

This Atma is separate from the buddhi, mana, and prana. Make a firm decision about this fact. *Chiddatmaaham nityashuddho buddha e`ve`ti nishchayam.* 'I am not jada. I am the chetan Atma. I am not sullied with the feeling that I do the karmas; there is no agnan in me. I am always Gnan-swarup.'

Keep this in mind all the time. See yourself as separate from the buddhi, mana and prana; from the deha and ahankara. The Gnan through which you know everything, the eyes through which you see, the ears through which you hear, the mana through which you think – what is that Gnan, after all?

That Gnan is actually the swarup of the Paramatma. When you get the sakshat anubhav of this, you get vignan. The Atma is complete in itself, and it is everywhere. It is the Chit and it is the Anand; it is always complete. It is free of upadhis like the buddhi etc. It is a secret that cannot be fathomed by using the buddhi. That is why the Dharma established by the buddhi, by doing Dharmanushthana – Dharmic rituals – is not accepted as the Dharma.

Dharma comes into the buddhi at the adesh – commands – of about what should be done, and Gnan comes into the buddhi through the

Mahavakyas etc that establish the Tattva. And, the aropita – alleged – objects are used to remove the faulty superimpositions that hide the swarup.

The nitya, siddhi, shuddha, Atma remains as it is.

The Paramatma does not manifest in the buddhi; He is established in the buddhi by the Veda-Shastras, mantras, japa, tapa etc. The sansara that is established in the buddhi has to be removed before the Paramatma can be established in it. Both the established and the un-established are removed; the Tattva remains in its pristine form.

Upadhis like the buddhi are of no use in this. There is no parinam in this. This Tattva is svaprakash; it needs no other source of illumination to be known. It shows the deha etc, but never gets covered up by anything. It is one and it is non-dual – *e`ka e`vaadviteeyashcha.* In general, one is with connection to two, it is half of two. One and one make two. The advitiya is such that it never changes. You cannot add, subtract, multiply or divide the advitiya to make changes in it.

The Tattva is *abaadhita* – it cannot be negated, and therefore it is the Satya. For example. Nobody can come to the conclusion, 'I don't exist', because his buddhi will tell him that he does exist. That is why 'I' is Satya. The Atma is Satya. The test of its being the Satya is in this conclusion; not by any equipment.

Gnan means that, which illuminates everything. Nobody can come to the conclusion 'I am a-prakash – I am the darkness of agnan.' It is Gnan to even know that you don't know! Thus, the Paramatma's swarup is asanga, svaprakash, the drashta – and this is known by vignan. *'Aachaarya shaastropade`shaadhaikyagnaanam yadaa bhave`t'* – by the upadesh of the Acharya and the Shastras – both, not just one, because, Acharyas are of many kinds. They teach the Dvaita, the Advaita, the Dvaita-Advaita, A-shoonya, and other Matas.

The Acharya should adhere absolutely to the constitution of the Veda-Shastra. There are rules even for the Gurus. A Guru must have a proper

grasp of the Gnan of the oneness of the Brahman, through the method of Vedanta. He must have a proper understanding of the non-duality of the Brahman.

Aatmanorjeevaparayormoolaavidhaa tadaiva hi,

leeyate` kaaryakaranaih sahaiva paramaatmani. 4. 43

Saavasthaa mukttirityukttaa hyupachaaroayamaatmani,

idam mokshasvaroopam te` kathitam raghunandana. 4. 44

Gnaanavignaanavairaagyasahitam me` paraatmanah,

kintve`taddurlabham manye` madbhakttivimukhaatmanaam. 4. 45

Chakshushmataamapi tathaa raatrau samyang na drishyate`,

padam deepasame`taanaam drishyate` samyage`va hi. 4. 46

E`vam madbhakttiyukttaanaamaatmaa samyak prakaashate`,

madbhaktte`h kaaranam kinchidvakshyaami shrunu tattvatah. 4. 47

When a person gets Gnan about the oneness of the Atma and the Paramatma his mool-avidya is destroyed. When avidya is destroyed, neither the karya, nor the karana, nor anything else remains separate from the Paramatma.

The state where nothing remains separate from the Paramatma is called Mukti. Furthermore, this state is not separate in a state that is separate from the Paramatma in any other Paramatma.

'Upachaaroayamaatmani' – this is the solution of the state of Mukti in the Atma. By calling it an *upachaara* – meaning, a remedy – the indication is that t is imagined in a secondary or lesser form.

Why is it *kalpita* (imagined)?

It is kalpita because we are stuck to a state of bandhan – we are in a bandhan-avastha, and we have to do a kalpana of a Mukta-avastha in order to remove the bandhan-avastha.

‘”He Lakshman! I have told you the swarup of Mukti, along with Gnan, vignan and vairagya. However, what I have explained will not be understood by anybody who is turned away from My bhakti. Just as people with good vision cannot see things in the dense darkness of night, unless there is a lamp that lights things, the chitta has to have bhakti for a person to understand this.

Now I will tell you how bhakti is obtained.

Madbhakttasango matse`vaa madbhaktaanaam nirantaram,

e`kaadashyupavaasaadi mama parvaanumodanam. 4. 48

Matkathaashravane` paathe` vyaakhyaane` sarvadaa ratih,

matpoojaaparinishthaa cha mama naamaanukeertanam. 4. 49

E`vam satatayukttaanaam bhakttiravyabhichaarinee,

mayi sanjaayate` nityam tatah kimavashishyate`. 4. 50

Ato madbhakttiyukttasya gnaanam vignaaname`va cha,

vairaagyam cha bhave`chchheeghram tato mukttimavaapnuyaat. 4. 51

The first point is that you will get bhakti if you keep the company of bhaktas. Association colours a person’s thinking. If you keep the company of people who think there is no Ishwara you will become an atheist.

The first and greatest guna of bhakti is to associate with the greatest of bhaktas. After that, to do My seva and the seva of My bhaktas. Fast on the days of ekadashi, celebrate Bhagwan’s festivals, take interest in listening to Bhagwan’s katha, doing paatha, and listening to spiritual discourses. Have nishtha for puja. Do sankirtan of Bhagwan’s names and remain engrossed in activities that keep away the wrong type of vrittis. If bhakti arises in the hriday, nothing further remains for him to obtain.

Therefore, when bhakti comes into the jeevan of a manushya he gets Gnan, vignan, vairagya, and everything that is beneficial. He gets Mukti.

Kathitam sarvame`tatte` tava prashnaanusaaratah,

asminmanah samaadhaaya yastishthe`tsa tu mukttibhaak. 4. 52

Na vakttavyamidam yatnaanmadbhaktakttivimukhaaya hi,

madbhakttaaya pradaatavyamaahooyaapi prayatnatah. 4. 53

Ya idam tu pathe`nnityam shraddhaabhakttisamanvitah,

agnaanapataladhvaantam vidhooya parimuchyate`.. 4. 54

Lakshman! I have answered the questions you asked Me. Compose your mana and become established in this. Mukti is something you have always had. Do not tell what I have told you to anybody who is turned away from My bhakti; tell it only to My bhaktas. If necessary, call them and tell them about it. It is meant to be explained only to those who have bhakti for Me.

If a manushya does daily paatha-shravan of what I have just told you he gets shraddha-bhakti. His agnan is removed. He gets Mukti.

Bhakttaanaam mama yoginaam savimalasvaantaatishaantaatmanaam matse`vaabhirataatmanaam cha vimalagnaanaatmanaam sarvadaa,

sangam yah kurute` sadodyatamatistatse`vanaananyadheermokshastasya kare` sthitoahamanisham drishyo bhave` naanyathaa. 4. 55

Those who keep the sang of my bhaktas, whose antahkarana is shuddha, who are always engrossed in My seva, have shraddha, Gnan, and are constantly vigilant about using their buddhi to do seva of My bhaktas, hold Moksha in the palm of their hands."'

That means, just as if you have five rupees in your hand, and you can give them to whoever you want, Bhagwan's bhaktas can give Moksha to whoever they want!

Another point about those who believe that they will be Mukta if they are not reborn – or, if they don't go to Swarga-Narak, do not understand the meaning of Moksha.

When you begin to see the Paramatma here, in this jeevan, in every moment and every particle, that is Mukti! Let go of the next janma, and forget about Swarga – the dukha you see in this jeevan is removed, and you obtain the Paramatma. That is Mukti.

See the Paramatma within yourself and see Him in others – *drishya bhave` naanyathaa.*

'"I am always seen in the vyavhar of the sansara. It is not that the Paramatma's darshan is possible only after mrityu, or when a jeeva goes to Vaikuntha, or during Samadhi, or in a state of Moksha. Those who are turned away from My bhaktas and My bhakti don't get My darshan."'

Mokshastasya kare` sthitoahamanisham drishya bhave` naanyathaa.

There are two main episodes n the Aranya Kand. One is Agastya Muni's stuti of Bhagwan Ramachandra. This is exactly what Goswamiji has written: *Ve`daantave`dyam vibhum – 'gnaanagamya jaya raghuraayee*. Agastyaji's stuti is filled with Vedanta.

The other important episode is Rama's upadesh to Lakshman. Both these episodes are given in the Aranya Kand, which indicates that they are both *aranyaka* – of the forest. They are meant for the viraktas who live in the van. This upadesh should not be given to all and sundry; it belongs exclusively to the viraktas.

Aranya Kanda

The Fifth Sarga

Shurpanakha's punishment and the killing of Khar and other Rakshasas.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Tasmin kaale` mahaaranye` raakshasee kaamaroopinee,

vichachaara mahaasattvaa janasthaananivaasinee. 5. 1

E`kadaa gautameeteere` panchavatyaah sameepatah,

padmavajraankushaamkaani padaani jagateepate`h. 5. 2

Drishtvaa kaamapareetaatmaa paadasaundaryamohitaa,

Pashyanti saa shanairaayaadraaghavasya nive`shaman. 5. 3

Shurpanakha means a woman who loves to decorate her shareer. She spends a lot of time and care in dressing up elaborately and coddling her shareer. Shurpanakha is a metaphysical word – *shoorpavat nakhaah asyaah* – a woman whose finger nails are like a *soopa* – meaning, a winnowing basket. A woman who tends and decorates her nails lovingly.

How would such a woman stay?

She will use a lot of eye make-up, dress her hair elaborately, and choose her apparel carefully. The very name, Shurpanakha, indicates her sartorial accomplishments.

What was Shurpanakha like?

She was very skilled in makeup. She could assume any form she wanted to. Her heart was that of a Rakshasi and she had great shakti. She lived alone in a secluded place in the dense van and wandered around at will.

One day, Shurpanakha walked down by the bank of the Godavari and came to Panchavati. She saw the footprints of Ramachandra on the ground. They had the divine marks of the Shankha, Padma, Vajra, Ankush, and Pataka.

If a bhakta sees Bhagwan's charan-chinha, bhakti comes into his hriday. If a Tattvagnani sees them, Gnan comes. However, when this Rakshasi saw the imprints of Bhagwan's charan, she felt lust, because that was her mental eligibility.

No subject gives kama – kama arises in the mana, depending on the level of the mana that is already created. The object of kama is not responsible in any way. Nobody can say, 'my mana was spoilt because this woman came before my eyes.' Nor, 'this is very bad.' It is the mana that is bad, and that is why kama comes into it.

'When Shurpanakha saw the beauty of Bhagwan's footprints she became infatuated. Her mana was agitated with lust – *kaamapareetaatmaa.* She followed the charan-chinha and came to Rama.'

In the books of the Ramanuja Sampradaya, Shurpanakha's greatness is glorified in such a way that the upasakas of Shri Radha-Krishna and other Vaishnavas feel offended.

Tatra saa tam ramaanaatham seetayaa saha sansthitam,

kandarpasadrisham raamam drishtvaa kaamavimohitaa. 5. 4

Raakshasee raaghavam praaha kasya tvam kah kimaashrame`,

yuktto jataavalkalaadyaih saadhyam kim te`atra me` vada. 5. 5

Aham shoorpanakhaa naama raakshasee kaamaroopunee,

bhaginee raakshase`ndrasya raavanasya mahaatmanah. 5. 6

'Shurpanakha saw Bhagwan's charan-chinha and kama came into her mana. She followed them till she reached Bhagwan. Shri Ramachandra

was sitting with Sitaji. Shurpanakha went up to Ramachandra and began to touch Bhagwan Ramachandra.

“Why do you stay here, in this Ashram?” she asked. “Why have you donned this jata-valkal? I am a Rakshasi. My name is Shurpanakha. I am the sister of Ravana, who is the Raja of the Rakshasas. He is a great Mahatma.”’

Shraddha is according to the character of the individual. The Gita says, *‘sattvaanuroopaa sarvasva shraddhaa bhavati bhaarata’* – shraddha is connected to the kind of hriday a person has. It is mostly of the same kind.

I remember a man who had come to meet me when I was a guest of the Raja of Gwalior. He was from Ayodhya. When the Raja or the Maharani came into the room he would move and sit close to me. The rest of the time he spent chatting with the driver or the cook. A person tends to seek the company of people of the same mental level.

Khare`na sahitaa bhraatraa vasaamyatraiva kaanane`,

raagnaa dattam cha me` sarvam munibhakshaa vasaamyaham. 5. 7

Tvaam tu ve`ditumichchhaami vada me` vadataam vara,

taamaaha raamanaamaahamayodhyaadhipate`h sutah. 5. 8

E`shaa me` sundaree bhaaryaa seetaa janakanandinee,

sa tu bhraataa kaneeyaanme` lakshmanoateeva sundarah. 5. 9

Kim krityam te` mayaa broohi kaaryam bhuvanasundari,

iti raamavachah shrutvaa kaamaartaa saabraveedidam. 5. 60

E`hi raama mayaa saardham ramasva girikaanane`,

kaamaartaaham na shaknomi tyakttum tvaam kamale`kshanam. 5. 11

‘Shurpanakha called Ravana a Mahatma! She said, “I don’t live alone. I stay in the van with my brother, Khar. The Raja has given us leave to

eat the flesh of the Mahatmas – *munibhakshaa vasaamyaham.* I eat the Munis and live here. Tell me who you are and your reason for coming here."

"I am the putra of the Maharaja of Ayodhya," said Ramji. "This is My beautiful patni, Sita, the daughter of Raja Janak. My handsome brother, Lakshman is outside. Tell Me what work you have with Me."

Ramji provoked Shrupanakha by saying, *"kim kritvaa te` mayaa broohi kaaryam bhuvanasundari* – you are the most beautiful woman".

Shurpanakha's desire for Rama became acute. She said, "come with me; let us revel in the van and hills together. I am overcome with desire. I cannot leave you."

Raamah seetaam kataakshe`na pashyan sasmitamabraveet,

bhaaryaa mamaishaa kalyaanee vidyate` hyanapaayinee. 5. 12

Tvam tu saalyadukhe`na katham sthaasyasi sundari,

bahiraaste` mama bhraataa lakshmanoateevasundarah. 5. 13

Tavaanuroopo bhavitaa patiste`naiva sanchara,

ityukttaa lakshmanam praaha patirme` bhava sundara. 5. 14

Bhraaturaagnaam puraskritya sangachchhaavoadya maachiram,

ityaaha raakshasee ghoraa lakshmanam kaamamohitaa. 5. 15

Shri Rama gave Sitaji a side glance, smilingly and told Shurpanakha, "look, Shurpanakha, My patni is with Me. She is a saubhagyavati – fully devoted to Me. She never leaves Me for even one minute. Why do you choose to live with a sauta and be a second patni? You are a beautiful woman. My brother Lakshman is outside. He is very handsome and you are very beautiful. He will be better suited for you. Go and enjoy yourself with him."

Shurpanakha went to Lakshman and said, "marry me. Be my pati. You are handsome and I am beautiful. We should unite."

Taamaaha lakshmanah saadhvi daasoaham tasya dheematah,

daasee bhavishyasi tvam tu tato dukhataram nu kim. 5. 16

Tame`va gachchha bhadram te` sa tu raajaakhile`shvarah,

tachchhrutvaa punarapyaagaadraaghavam dushtamaanasaa. 5. 17

Krodhaadraama kimartham maam bhraamayasyanavasthitah,

idaaneeme`va taam seetaam bhakshayaami tavaagratah. 5. 1

The terrible Rakshasi became infatuated with Lakshman. Lakshmanji told her, "Devi, you are a very noble and pious lady, and I am a servant of Ramachandra, who is the greatest Gnani. If you marry me you will become a dasi. You are very simple-minded; don't you realize what it means to become a maid servant? That is not a wise decision."

Shurpanakha said, "your brother told me to go to you."

"No; if you become a dasi you will have to undergo suffering. Shri Rama is a great Raja – He can have many patnis – why don't you go to Him?"

The wicked woman went back to Ramachandra. She was angry. 'You are just sending me from one to another!" she grumbled. "I will devour Sita at one. Then, I won't even feel jealous of her, because I won't have a sauta any more. I will be your only patni."

Ityukttvaa vikataakaaraa jaanakeemanudhaavati,

tato raamaagnayaa khangamaadaaya parigrihya taam. 5. 19

Chichhe`da naasaam karnau cha lakshmano laghuvikramah,

tato ghoradhvanim kritvaa rudhiraakttavapurdrutam. 5. 20

Krandamaanaa papaataagre` kharasya parushaaksharaa,

kime`taditi taamaaha kharah kharataraaksharah. 5. 21

Ke`naivam kaaritaasi tvam mrityorvaktraanuvartinaa,

vada me` tam vadhishyaami kaalakalpamapi kshanaat. 5. 22

Tamaaha raakshasee raamah seetaalakshmanasanyutah,

dandakam nirbhayam kurvannaaste` godaavareetate`. 5. 23

Maame`vam kritavaanstsya bhraataa te`naiva choditah,

yadi tvam kulajaatoasi veeroasi jahi tau ripoo. 5. 24

Tayostu rudhiram paasye` bhakshayaitau sudurmadau,

no che`tpraanaanparityajya yaasyaami yamasaadanam. 5. 25

Saying this, Shurpanakha assumed a terrifying form and ran towards Janakiji. Rama made a sign to Lakshmanji and he sliced off her nose and ears with his sword – *chichhe`da naasaam karnau cha lakshmano laghuvikramah.* This was not at all difficult for Lakshman.'

Swarga abides in the nose. People say, 'your nose is cut', to indicate shame and misfortune. The word *naaka* – meaning nose – means Swarga in Sanskrit. The ears means the Shrutis. Thus, neither did the Vedas remain the praman in the form of the Shrutis, nor did Swarga – which is the fruit of the Shrutis – remain for Shurpanakha. Lakshmanji cut away her awareness of the Dharma taught by the Vedas and the Swarga that is a result of Gnan and Dharma.

What will a promiscuous woman like Shurpanakha get?

'Shurpanakha gave a great roar. She went to her brother Ravana and fell on the ground before him.

"What has happened?" asked Ravana. "Who has severed your nose and ears?"

"Rama has come here with Sita,' said Shurpanakha. "They are living in the Dandakaranya without fear. They have a hut on the bank of the Godavari. Rama's brother Lakshman did this to me at Rama's command.

If you are truly the son of your father – *yadi tvam kulajaatoasi* – of a noble lineage, and if you are a valiant warrior, kill these two wicked men! I will drink their blood and you can eat their flesh. I will kill myself if you don't do this!"

Tachchhrutvaa tvaritam praagaatkharah krodhe`na moorchhitah,

chaturdasha sahasraani rakshasaam bheemakarmanaam. 5. 26

Chodayaamaasa raamasya sameepam vadhakaankshayaa,

kharashcha trishiraashchaiva dooshanashchaiva raakshasah. 5. 27

Sarve` raamam yayuh sheeghram naanaapraharanodyataah,

shrutvaa kolaahalam te`sham raamah saumitrimabraveet. 5. 28

Shrooyate` vipulah shabdo noonamaayaanti raakshasaah,

bhavishyati mahadyuddham noonamadya mayaa saha. 5. 29

Seetaam neetvaa guhaam gatvaa tatra tishtha mahaabala,

hantumichchhaamyaham sarvaan raakshasaan ghoraroopinah. 5. 30

Khar was furious! He ordered the fourteen thousand Rakshasas under his command to prepare to attack. Khar, Trishira and Dushan were all together when they attacked Ramachandra.

Ramachandra told Lakshman, "There is growing noise approaching. It seems that the Rakshasas are on their way to attack us. I will have a fierce battle with them. Take Sita and go into a cave, and guard her. I want to kill these Rakshasas Myself."'

If one Rama comes into a manushya's hriday, the whole clan of Rakshasas – like kama, krodha, lobha etc – is destroyed by just His coming!

Atra kinchinna vakttavyam shaapitoasi mamopari,

tathe`ti seetaamaadaaya lakshmano gavharam yayau. 5. 31

Raamah parikaram badhvaa dhanuraadaaya nishthuram,

tooneeraavakshayasharau baddhvaayattoabhavatprabhuh. 5. 32

Tata aagatya rakshaansi raamasyopari chikshipuh,

aayudhaanivichitraani paashaanaanpaadapaanapi. 5. 33

Taani chichhe`da raamoapi leelayaa tilashah kshanaat,

tato baanasahasre`na hatvaa taan sarvaraakshasaan. 5. 34

Kharam trishirasam chaiva dooshanam chaiva raakshasam,

jaghaana praharaardhe`na sarvaaneva raghoottamah. 5. 35

Lakshmanji, however, objected to this. "We will kill the Rakshasas together," he declared. "How can I go and sit in a cave when You are attacked?"

Ramachandra administered an oath that Lakshamn should go into a cave with Sitaji, to keep her safe. *"Atra kinchinna vakttavyam shaapitoasi mamopari* – just do what I say."

Lakshmanji obediently went with Sitaji to a near-by cave. Ramachandra tightened His garments and stood ready for the attack, with his dhanush-baan at the ready. The Rakshasas has a variety of weapons, made of stone, iron, wood, trees etc. Ramachandra killed them all – it was child's play for Him. Khar, Dushan, and Trishira were all killed within minutes – *jaghaana praharaardhe`na sarvaane`va raghoottamah.*

Lakshmanoapi guhaamadhyaatseetaamaadaaya raaghave`,

samarpya raakshasaandrishtvaa hataanvismayamaayayau. 5. 36

Seetaa raamam samaalingya prasannamukhapankajaa,

shastravranaani chaange`shu mamaarja janakaatmajaa. 5. 37

Lakshmanji brought Sitaji out of the cave and came to Ramachandra. Even he was wonderstruck at Bhagwan's Ramachandra's amazing feat.'

Goswami Tulsidasji has described a miracle in this episode, of how Ramachandra's divine beauty enthralled Khar and Dushan. He has written that when Khar and Dushan saw Ramachandra they said, 'he is outstandingly beautiful. It is not right to kill such beauty. Let us catch him and bring him – we will exhibit him, for people will never see such beauty again!'

Dharahu dharahu dhaavahu subhata……,

Naaga asura sura nara muni je`te`, de`khe` jite` hate` hama ke`te`.

Hama bhari janama sunahu saba bhaayee, de`khe` naheen asi sundarataayee.

Run and catch him! If we kill him such beauty will never be seen again!

Vadha laayaka nahin purusha anoopaa – the incomparable beauty of this man should never be destroyed!

'Sitaji came out of the cave and clung to Ramachandra. Her face was suffused with joy. She gently wiped His wounds – *shastravranaani change`shu mamaarja janakaatmajaa.'*

An ordinary author wouldn't even have thought about what Janakiji did when she came out of the cave.

Saapi dudraava drishtvaa taanhataan raakshasapungavaan,

lankaan gatvaa sabhaamadhye` kroshantee paadasannidhau. 5. 38

Raavanasya papaatorvyaam bhaginee tasya rakshasah,

drishtvaa taam raavanah praaha bhagineem bhayavihvalaam. 5. 39

Uttishthottishtha vatse` tvam viroopakarana tava,

kritam shakre`na vaa bhadre` yame`na varune`na vaa. 5. 40

Kube`re`naathavaa broohi bhasmeekuryaam kshane`na tam,

raakshasee tamuvaache`dam tvam pramatto vimoodhadheeh. 5. 41

Paanaasakttah streevijitah shandhah sarvatra lakshyase`,

chaarachakshurviheenastvam katham raajaa bhavishyasi. 5. 42

Kharashcha nihatah sankhye` dooshanastrishiraastathaa,

chaturdasha sahasraani raakshasaanaam mahaatmanaam. 5. 43

Nihitaani kshane`naiva raame`naasurashatrunaa,

janasthaanamashe`she`na muneenaam nirbhayam kritam,

na jaanaasi vimoodhastvamata e`va mayochyate`. 5. 44

Raavana uvaacha

Ko vaa raamah kimartham vaa katham te`naasuraa hataah,

samyakkathaya me` te`sham moolaghaatam karomyaham. 5. 45

'Shurpanakha went to Lanka and fell at Ravana's feet.

"Why are you so frightened, Sister?" asked Ravana. "Get up! Get up! Who has deformed you like this? I will destroy him in a moment, whether it is Indra, Yamaraj, Varun, or Kuber!"

That Rakshasi told Ravana, "*tvam vimoodhadheeh* – you are a great fool, Ravana!"'

Shurpanakha had the courage to call Ravana a fool to his face; there was nobody else in Lanka who would dare to do this!

'"You drink all day long and are controlled by women! You are an eunuch! You have no *chaarachakshurviheenastvam* – spies and informers. You are not fit to be the Raja! Khar was killed, Dushan was killed, Trishira was killed, and fourteen thousand Rakshasas were killed by Rama within a few moments! The place has become free of fear for the manushyas, and you don't even know! This is why I say that you are a great fool – *na jaanaasi vimoodhadheestvamata e`va mayochyate`.* Only a fool does not know what is happening in his Rajya!"

Ravana asked, "how did this happen, Devi? Tell me at once. I will uproot them immediately."

Shoorpanakhovaacha

Janasthaanaadaham yaataa kadaachidgautameetate`,

tatra panchavatee naama puraa munijanaashrayaa. 5. 46

Tatraashrame` mayaa drishto raamo raajeevalochanah,

dhanurbaanadharah shreemaan jataavalkalamanditah. 5 47

Kaneeyaananujastasya lakshmanoapi tathaavidhah,

tasya bhaaryaa vishaalaakshee roopinee shreerivaaparaa. 5. 4

De`vagandharvanaagaanaam manushyaanaam tathaavidhaa,

na drishtaa na shrutaa raajandyotayantee vanam shubhaa. 5. 49

Aane`tumahamudyukttaa taam bhaaryaartham tavaanagha,

lakshmano naama tadbhraataa chichhe`da mama naasikaam. 5. 50

Karnau cha noditaste`na raame`na sa mahaabalah,

tatoahamatidukhe`na rudatee kharamanvagaam. 5. 51

Shurpanakha said, "I was walking in that area once, and came to the bank of the Godavari. There is a place called Panchavati, where many Sadhus live. I saw that Rama, whose eyes are lotuses, was living there. He is very beautiful. He keeps a dhanush and baan with him. He has a jata and wears valkal. His younger brother Lakshman resembles him. Rama's patni is outstandingly beautiful. Her eyes are large; she looks like a second Laxmi!"'

Shurpanakha did not tell Ravana that she became infatuated with Rama. It is a woman's way to talk about other people's faults, but never their own faults. Women complain about men looking at them, but say nothing about their looking at men.

Once, at our Ashram in Vrindavan, a lady complained to me about a certain man. 'Whenever I see him he is looking at me,' she said. I asked her, 'does he look at you only when you look at him, or does he look

at you even when you're not looking at him? After all, how did you come to know that he keeps looking at you?'

'Every time I look at him, I see that he is looking at me,' she said.

'Stop looking at him,' I told her. 'Don't say anything to him.'

'Shurpanakha said, "Rama's wife is amazingly beautiful, Ravana! There is no woman who can compare in all the three lokas – not among the manushyas, nor the Gandharvas, Nagas or Devtas! The whole van shines with her radiant beauty. It came to my mind that I should bring her here so you can make her your patni."'

Note how cleverly Shurpanakha spoke. She concealed the fact that she wanted Rama for herself and said she wanted Sita for Ravana.

'"And that is why Rama's brother Lakshman cut off my nose and ears. He is very strong. I went weeping to Khar.

Soapi raamam samaasaadya yuddham raakshasayoothapaih,

atah kshane`na raame`na te`naiva balashaalinaa. 5. 52

Sarve` te`na vinashtaa vai raakshasaa bheemavikramaah,

yadi raamo manah kuryaatrailokyam nimishaardhatah. 5. 53

Bhasmeekuryaanna sande`ha iti mama prabho,

yadi saa tava bhaaryaa syaatsafalam tava jeevitam. 5. 54

Ato yatasva raaje`ndra yathaa te` ballabhaa bhave`t,

seetaa raajeevapatraakshee sarvalokaikasundaree. 5. 55

Saakshaadraamasya puratah sthaatum tvam na kshamah prabho,

maayayaa mohayitvaa tu praapsyase` taam raghuttamam. 5. 56

There was a great fight with Rama after that, in which Rama killed the whole Rakshasa army, including Khar, Dushan and Trishira. It seems to me that if Rama is angered he can burn all three lokas to ashes.

Ravana! Your life is futile unless you get Sita for your patni – *yadi saa tava bhaaryaa syaatsafalam tava jeevitam* – so, try to make Janaki your bharya. She is the most beautiful woman in the world. And one thing more – you cannot face Rama in a fight, so use Maya to procure Sita."

Shrutvaa tatsookttavaakyaishcha daanamaanaadibhistathaa,

aashvaasya bhagineem raajaa pravive`sha svakam graham,

tatra chintaaparo bhootvaa nidraam raatrau na labdhavaan. 5. 57

E`ke`na raame`na katham manushyamaatre`na nashtah sabalah kharo me`,

bhraataa katham me` balaveeryadarpayuto vinashto bata raaghave`na. 5. 58

Yadvaa na raamo manujah pare`sho maam hantukaamah sabalam balaudhaih,

sampraarthitoayam druhine`na poorvam manushyaroopoadya raghoh kule`bhoot. 5. 59

Vadhyo yadi syaam paramaatmanaaham vaikuntharaajyam paripaalaye`aham,

no che`didam raakshasaraajyame`va bhokshye` chiram raamamato vrajaami. 5. 60

Ittham vichintyaakhilaraakshase`ndro raamam viditvaa parame`shvaram harim,

virodhabuddhyaiva hari prayaami drutam na bhaktyaa bhagavaan praseede`t. 5. 61

Ravana comforted Shurpanakha by showing her a lot of respect and giving her lavish gifts. Then he went into his palace thinking deeply. Sleep eluded him. Thoughts of Rama rushed through his mind. "Rama was alone. He is just a manushya. He is not even a Devta. How could

he destroy my army, including Khar and Dushan? Is it possible that he is not a manushya – he is the Parameshwara who has taken an Avatar to kill me and my army? Brahmaji would have prayed to Him, and He took an Avatar and came in the Raghu vansha. If Rama kills me I will become Vishnu, and protect Vaikuntha. If not, I will have this Rajya forever and I will also have Janaki. So, it is better for me to be hostile to Rama."'

Goswamiji has written –

Sura ranjana bhanjana mahi bhaaraa,

jau bhagavanta leenha avataara.

Taun mein jaayi baira hathi karihaun,

prabhu sara prama taje` bhava tarihaun.

Hoyihi bhajana na taamasa de`haa,

mana krama vachana mantra dridha e`haa.

Jaun nara roopa bhoopa suta dou,

harihaun naari jeeti rana dou.

Goswamiji's words are a translation of these shlokas. Ravana felt that it was not possible for him to get Bhagwan through prema, so he decided to use a *virodha-vritti* – hostility – to become engrossed in thought of Ramachandra and obtain Bhagwan. He knew that Bhagwan is obtained more quickly through enmity than through prema!

That means, the vritti's identification with Bhagwan is the swarup of the Bhagwat-Dharma. Actually, according to the Dharma described by the Shrutis and the Smritis, nobody can obtain Bhagwan by being hostile to Him. The illusion of His form gives kalyan even to those who have hatred for Him.

Aranya Kanda

The Sixth Sarga

Ravana's going to Marich.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Vichintyaivam nishaayaam sa prabhaate` rathamasthitah,

raavano manasaa kaarame`kam nishchitya buddhimaan. 6. 1

Yayau maareechasadanam param paaramudanvatah,

maareechastatra munivajjataavalkaladhaarakah. 6. 2

Dhyaayan hridi paraatmaanam nirgunam gunabhaasakam,

samptadhivirame`apashyadraavanam grihamaagatam. 6. 3

Drutamutthaaya chaalingya poojayitvaa yathaavidhi,

kritaatithyam sukhaaseenam maareecho vaakyamamabraveet. 6. 4

Samaanamaname`tatte` rathe`naike`na raavana,

chintaapara ivaabhaasi Hridi kaaryam vichintayan. 6. 5

Broohi me` na hi gopyam che`tkaravaani tava priyam,

nyaayyam che`d broohi raaje`ndra vrijinam maam sprishe`nnahi. 6. 6

It is evident that Ravana gave serious thought before taking any action. People who do things without considering all aspects of the matter usually fail in their purpose. Ravana thought out the matter well and decided that it was best for him to be hostile to Rama.

'"If Rama is the Ishwara and kills me, I will get Vaikuntha," he thought. "If he is not the Ishwara I will get Janaki for my patni and the Rajya of Lanka."'

Ravana had bhakti for Bhagwan in his hriday. Ravana's roop was double-sided. One roop was that he was Jay-Vijay who guarded Bhagwan in Vaikuntha. The seed of the buddhi of being Bhagwan's

parshad was in him. He had become a Rakshasa externally, and he also had a Rakshasa's buddhi. He used his buddhi to decide what course of action was best for him. To act impulsively is not good. A person who takes hasty decisions without using vivek faces many problems – *sahasaa vidaadheeta na kriyaamavive`kah paramaapadaam padam* – nothing should be done in haste. A person who acts without using his vivek faces many problems.

Abhivarshati yoanupaalayan vidhibeejaani vive`kavaarinaa,

sa sadaa falashaalineem kriyaam sarvo lokaivaadhishthati.

Proper vichar should be done before taking any action, even if it means a little delay. Nothing should be done without considering all aspects of the matter.

'Ravana went across the sea to the house of Marich. Marich lived like a Muni. He had a jata and wore valkal garments. He did dhyana of the nirguna Paramatma. He was not an ordinary Rakshasa.

Marich came out of his Samadhi and saw Ravana seated before him. He got up at once and embraced Ravana. After the ritual welcome was done, he asked Ravana, "you have come alone, without even a driver to drive the chariot, even thought you are the Maharaja-dhiraj, and Swami of all three lokas. What is the reason? I see signs of tension on your face. If it is not a secret, please tell me what is troubling you. I will do whatever you want of me.

However, just keep one thing in mind – don't do injustice with me – *nyaayyam che`d broohi raaje`ndra vrijinam maam sprishe`nnahi* – tell me only if it is keeping with justice. Don't make me do paapa."

Raavana uvaacha

Asti raajaa dasharathah sake`taadhipatih kila,

raamanaamaa sutastasya jye`shthah satyaparaakramah. 6. 7

Vivaasayaamaasa sutam vanam vanajanapriyam,

bhaaryaa sahitam bhraatraa lakshmane`na samanvitam. 6. 8

Sa aaste` vipine` ghore` panchavatyaashrame` shubha`,

tasya bhaaryaavishaalaakshee seetaalokavimohinee. 6. 9

Raamo niraparaadhaanme` raakshasaan bheemavikramaan,

kharam cha hatvaa vipine` sukhamaaste`atinirbhayah. 6. 10

Bhaginyaahshoorpanakhaayaa nirdoshaayaashcha naasikaam,

karnau chichhe`da dushtaatmaa vane` tishthiti nirbhayah. 6. 11

Atastvayaa sahaaye`na gatvaa tatpraanavallabhaam,

aanayishyaami vipine` rahite` raaghave`na taam. 6. 12

Tvam tu maayaamrigo bhootvaa hyaashramaadapane`shyasi,

raamam cha lakshmanam chaiva tadaa seetaam haraamyaham. 6. 13

Tvam tu taavatsahaayam me` kritvaa sthaasyasi poorvavat,

itye`vam bhaashamaanam tam raavanam veekshya vismitah. 6. 14

Ravana said, “there is a Raja Dashrath, who is the ruler of Ayodhya. He has a son whose name is Rama. Dashrath sent Rama to the van. Rama is beloved of the people who live in the van.”’

The word *vanajanapriyam* came from Ravana’s mouth. The meaning is that the people who live in the van are dear to Rama, and also that Rama is dear to the people who live in the van.

‘”Rama came into the dense van with his patni Sita and his brother Lakshman. They began to live in the Panchavati.

Rama’s patni is extraordinarily beautiful. She has big eyes. Her beauty entrances the whole world. Rama misbehaved first, and killed the Rakshasas who had done nothing to offend him. He killed Khar. Now he lives there without fear. He cut off the nose and ears of my sister Shurpanakha.

I want your help to make Rama's patni my patni. I want you to assume to form of a mriga – a golden deer – and lure Rama away from the Ashram. Help me to be successful in this."

Ke`ne`damupadirshta te` moolaghaatakaram vachah,

sa e`va shatrurvadhyashcha yastannaasham prateekshate`. 6. 15

Raamasya paurusham smritvaa chittamadyaapi raavanah,

baaloapi maam kaushikasya yagnasamrakshanaaya sah. 6. 16

Aagatastvishunaike`na paatayaamaasa saagare`,

yojanaanaam shatam raamastadaadi bhayavihvalah. 6. 17

Smritvaa smritvaa tade`vaaham raamam pashyaami sarvatah. 6. 18

Marich was taken aback when he heard this. "O Ravana!" he said, "who has suggested this to you? You will be completely uprooted if you do any such thing – *sa e`va shatrurvadhyashcha yastvannaasham prateekshate`* - Rama is waiting for you to come and give Him a chance to fight and kill you!

I well remember Rama's paurush. When He was still quite young He had guarded the Yagna of Kaushik Muni. He shot a baan at me which carried me for hundreds of miles and flung me into the sea – *yojanaanaam shatam.* Since that day I have been badly shaken at the memory. The very thought of Rama makes me see Him all round!

Dandake`api punarapyaham vane` poorvavairamanuchintayan hridi,

teekshnashringamrigaroopame`kadaa
maadrishairbahubhiraavritoabhyayaam. 6. 19

Raaghavam janakajaasamanvitam lakshmane`na sahitam tvaraanvitah,

aagatoahamatha hantumudyato maamvilokya sharame`kamakshipat. 6. 20

Te`na viddhahridayoahamudbhraman raakshase`ndra patitoasmi saagare`,

tatprabhrityahaidam samaashritah sthaanamoorjitamidam bhayaarditah. 6. 21

Raamame`va satatam vibhaavaye` bheetabheeta iva bhogaraashitah,

raajaratnaramaneerathaadikam shrotrayoryadi gatam bhayam bhave`t. 6. 22

Raama aagatah ihe`ti shankayaa baahyaakaaryamapi sarvamatyajam,

nidrayaa parivrito yadaa svape` raamame`va manasaanuchintayan. 6. 23

When Rama came to Dandakaranya I went once more to Him. I went in the form of a mriga with sharp antlers. I wanted to punish Him for what He had done to me. I took many other Rakshasas with me, also in deer form. We went as a herd, to attack Him with our horns.

Rama shot just one baan at me. It pierced my chest. I went whirling in the air and fell in the sea. Since that day I have lived here quietly. I don't venture anywhere near Rama. I am safe in this beautiful place. My fear of Rama makes me think of Him day and night – *bheetabheeta iva bhogaraashitah* – I want no bhoga; I want Rama! *Raajaratnaramaneerathaadikam shrotrayaryadi gatam bhayam bhave`t* – the sound of any word staring with 'r' – like raja, ratha, ramani etc – terrifies me. I feel Rama has come – *raama aagata ihe`ti shankayaa* – to kill me. That is why I have given up all work and other activities. My mana is filled with thoughts of Rama. I am unaware of the world. I see Rama even in my dreams.

Svapnadrishtagataraaghavam tadaa bodhito vigatanidra aasthitah,

tadbhavaanapi vimuchya chaagraham raaghavam prati griham prayaahi bhoh. 6. 24

Raksha raakshakulam chiraagatam tatsmritau sakalame`va nashyati,

tava hitam vadato mama bhaashitam parigrihaana paraatmani raaghave`. 6. 25

Tyaja virodhamatim bhaja bhakttitah paramakaaruniko raghunandanah,

ahamashe`shamidam munivaakyatoashrinavamaadiyuge` parame`shvarah. 6. 26

Brahmanaarthita uvaacha tam harih kim tave`psita maham karavaani tat,

brahmanokttamaravindalochana tvam prayaahi bhuvi maanusham vapuh,

dasharathaatmajabhaavamanjasaa jahi ripum dashakandharam hare`. 6. 27

Ato na maanusho raamah saakshaannaaraayanoavyayah,

maayaamaanushave`she`na vanam yaatoatinirbhayah. 6. 28

Ravana! I go to sleep thinking of Him and wake up thinking of Him. And so, Ravana, give up this insistence and go back. The lineage if the Rakshasas is ancient and unbroken. It is descended from Brahmaji. Please don't destroy this vansha.

What I say is for your good; listen to me. Give up being hostile to Ramachandra. Do His bhajan with bhakti. He is supremely compassionate. I have heard this from the Rishi-Munis, and now I am revealing it to you – it is Bhagwan Himself who has come as Rama in response to Brahmaji's prayer. Go to Ramachandra's sharan. Know for sure that He is not a mere manushya; He has come to destroy you. It is the sakshat avyaya Narayana who has come to the van as a manushya, using Maya to assume a manushya form. He is completely free of fear. He wants to relieve the Prithivi's burden.

If you wish to live in peace and be safe, go back to your house."

Bhoobhaaraharanaarthaaya gachchha taata graham sukham,

shrutvaa maareechavachanam raavanah pratyabhaashata. 6. 29

Paramaatmaa yadaa raamah praarthito brahmanaa kila,

maam hantum maanusho bhootvaa yatnaadiha samaagatah. 6. 30

Karishyatyachiraade`va satyasankalpa eeshvarah,

atoaham yatnatah seetaamaane`shyaamye`va raaghavaat. 6. 31

Vadhe` praapte` rane` praapsyaami paramam padam,

yadvaa raamam rane` hatvaa seetaam praapsyaami nirbhayah. 6. 32

Taduttishtha mahaabhaaga vichitramrigaroopadhrik,

raamam salakshmanam sheeghramaashramaadatidooratah. 6. 33

Aakramya gachchha tvam sheegrah sukham tishtha yathaa puraa,

atah param che`dyatkinchidbhaashase` madvibheeshanam. 6. 34

Ravana said, “Marich! If Rama is indeed the Paramatma who has come as a manushya to kill me, at Brahmaji’s prarthana, He is the satya-sankalpa Ishwara. His sankalpa always comes true, because He is all-powerful. Who can stop Him? He will fulfil His sankalpa in a few days, because the Parameshwara’s sankalpa is never false.

And so, maybe I would, or wouldn’t have abducted Sita, but now I will certainly do so and carry her off to Lanka. I will be killed in battle. If so, I will obtain the param pada. If not, I will kill Rama in battle and obtain Sita.

Ubhaya haatha muda modaka more` - either way I will get anand.

Come; assume the roop of a mriga, and wander about close toRama’s Ashram. If you say anything more to frighten me I will cut off your head with the sword you see at my side – *atah param che`dyatkinchidbhaashase` madvibheeshanam.”*

Hanishyaamyasinaane`na tvaamatraiva na sanshayah,

maareechastadvachah shrutvaa svaatmanye`vaanvachintayat. 6. 35

Yadi maam raaghavo hanyaattadaa muktto bhavaarnavaat,

maam hanyaadyadi che`ddushtastadaa me` nirayo dhruvam. 6. 36

Iti nishchitya maranam raamaadutthaaya ve`gatah,

abraveedraavanam raajankarobhyaagnaam tava prabho. 6. 37

Ityuktvaa rathamaasthaaya gato raamaashramam prati,

shuddhajaamboonadaprakhyo mrigoabhoodraupyabindukah. 6. 38

Ratnashringo manikhuro neelaratnavilochanah,

vidyutprabho vimugdhaasyo vichachaara vanaantare`. 6. 39

Raamaashramapadasyaante` seetaa drishtipathe` charan. 6. 40

Kshanam cha dhaavatyavitishthate` kshanam sameepamaagatya punarbhayaavritah,

e`vam sa maayaamrigave`sharoopadhrik chachaara seetaam parimohayankhalah. 6. 41

Hearing Ravana's words, Marich thought, "if I die at Rama's hands I will become Mukta, but if this wicked Ravana kills me I will get Narak."'

It is better to die at the hands of a good man, rather than a wicked man.

Bharavi has written:

Varam virodhoapi samam mahateemabhih.

It is better to have hostility for a Mahatma, because a Mahatma will do good even for his enemy.

'"*Iti nishchitya maranam raamaadutthaaya ve`gatah* – I will die at Rama's hands," decided Marich. He got up and told Ravana, "I will obey your command."

Marich sat on the chariot and went to Rama's Ashram. Using Maya, he assumed the form of a beautiful golden deer – *shuddhajaamboonada*. His shareer shone like silver-speckled gold. His horns shone like rubies, and his hooves glittered like gems. His eyes were the colour of dark blue sapphires. He gambolled from one spot to another. His face was innocent and endearing. He grazed around the Ashram coming before Sitaji repeatedly.

Aranya Kanda

The Seventh Sarga.

The killing of Marich and Sitaji's abduction.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Atha raamoapi tatsarvam gnaatvaa raavanache`shtitam,

uvaacha seetaame`kaante` shrunu jaanaki me` vachah. 7. 1

Raavano bhikshuroope`na aagamishyati te`antikam,

tvam tu chhayaam tvadaakaaraam sthaapayitvotaje` visha. 7. 2

Agnaavadrishyaroope`na varsham tishtha mamaagnayaa,

raavanasya vadhaante` maam poorvavatpraapsyase` shubha`. 7. 3

Shrutvaa raamoditam vaakyam saapi tatra tathaakarot,

maayaaseetaa bahih sthaapya svayamantardadhe`anale`. 7. 4

Ramji is always aware of everything. The jeeva's knowledge is samanya; it is ordinary and limited. The Paramatma, however, is sarvagna – He is all-knowing. He has Gnan about all the separate things. A manushya is *alpagna* – he has limited Gnan. A jeeva will be aware that people are sitting in a room but he won't know what is in their mana, because a manushya cannot be sarvagna. Sarvagnata is the Dharma of the Ishwara, not of the manushya.

The Vedantis who obtain Brahmagnan do not become sarvagna. The Gnan-marg gives *gnaapti* – anubhav of the oneness of the Atma and the non-dual Brahman. They do not become one with the Ishwara's sarvagnata. Sarvagnata (being all knowing) and alpagnata (having limited knowledge) are upadhis. The Vedantis who get Brahmagnan know that oneness, but it is *mithyaatva* – it is a relative truth, without anubhav.

If a person says that he knows the limits of the blueness if the akash, he will be asked, 'how can you know? The limits of the akash's blueness cannot be seen."

The person knows it because it is not there – the blueness is deceptive; it is illusionary. This is, to see what does not exist. A Gnani can have this Gnan.

However, what is the swarup of the blueness we see in the akash? What are its dimensions? What is specific in it? Where is its depth? None of this can be known by a jeeva.

'Ramachandra knows everything. He is the swarup of the Parameshwara. He told Sitaji in private, "Janaki, Ravana will come in the garb of a mendicant."'

In the Valmiki Ramayana it is written, *tridandiyatiroope`na* – Ravana came as a tridandi (holding a tripe staff) ascetic.

Cheats and scoundrels dress up as people who are respected or feared. Dacoits stay in the garb of a Mahatma. They also don the uniform of a Police Officer to harass people.

'Ramji told Sitaji, "don't stay in the hut any longer. Place a chaya form of yourself there."'

There is a technique by which a chaya-purush – meaning, an illusionary form that seems to be real – can be created. Just as we look into the mirror and our reflexion moves its limbs as we do, this chaya-purush moves, speaks and acts as though it is a real person.

In general people don't believe in this, but the so-called 'miracle workers' use a chaya-purush. They command it to go and fetch something from somewhere. It is as though the chaya-purush has a life of its own.

'So, not Janaki, but a chaya-Janaki would stay at the Ashram, while Janaki stayed in Agni in an invisible form.

Shri Ramachandra said, “you will have to do this for a year, Janaki. You will come back after I kill Ravana. Then, the chaya-jeevan will vanish.”’

Sita cannot stay with anybody except Shri Rama. Shanti stays only with the Paramatma; never with moha or ahankara.

Janaki did as Ramachandra told her. She ordered her chaya to stay in the outside world, in her place, and became invisible in Agni. This has been written in both the Kurma Purana as well as the Vayu Purana.

Even Lakshmanji did not know about this arrangement. The fact is, nobody knows the swarup or the purport of the Paramatma. Sitaji and Lakshmanji did not always know what was in Ramachandra’s mind. All events are superimpositions on the Brahman and are negated later.

It is not that Sitaji always stays with Rama. He was not with her when she was at Janakpur. She had to stay away from Him in the van, and also at the end. Lakshmanji also stayed away from Shri Ramachandra; he was born to a separate mother.

The Brahman is advitiya. Nothing else can stay with the swarup of the Brahman all the time. Being with Him is the adhyaropa and parting from Him is the apavad. Rama remains unchanged; the principle of Vedanta remains intact.

Maayaaseetaa tadaapashyanmrigam maayaavinirmitatam,

hasantee raamamabhye`tya provaacha vinayaanvitaa. 7. 5

Pashya raama mrigam chitram kaanakam ratnabhooshitam,

vichitrabindubhiryukttam charantamakutobhayam,

baddhvaa de`hi mama kreedaamrigo bhavatu sundarah. 5. 6

Tathe`ti dhanuraadaaya gachchhan lakshmanamabraveet,

raksha tvamatiyatne`na seetaam matpraanavallabhaam. 7. 7

Maayinah santi vipine` raakshasaa ghoradarshanaah,

atoanaavahitah saadhveem raksha seetaamaninditaam. 7. 8

Lakshmano raamamaahe`dam devaayam mrigaroopadrik,

Maareechoanna na sande`ha e`vam bhooto mrigah kutah. 7. 9

Shreeraama uvaacha

Yadi maareecha e`vaayam tadaa hanti na sanshayah,

mrigashche`daanayishyaami seetaavishramahe`tave`. 7. 10

Gamishyaami mrigam badhhhvaa hyaanayishyaami satvarah,

tvam prayatne`na santishtha seetaasamrakshanodyatah. 7. 11

'Maya-Sita saw the Maya-mriga wandering close to the Ashram. She went to Rama with a smile on her face, and said, "Rama – look! How beautiful that deer is! It's skin looks as if it was made of gold, spotted with silver. Its horns and hooves shine like gems. Please, *bhdhhvaa de`hi* – catch it for me. Tie it with a rope and bring it. I will keep I as a pet and play with it. It is charming!"'

Poets have written that when Ramachandra saw that Sitaji liked the golden deer very much, He felt, 'she is attracted to gold. She would have had lots of gold had she been in her palace. Why just a golden deer – I will send her to the city of gold.'

Bhagwan is a *kalpa-vriksha* - the wish-fulfilling tree. He abides in the hriday. When a manushya sits under the Kalpa-vriksha and makes a sankalpa because of some vasana, the wish is fulfilled in some way or another.

'Ramachandra took up His dhanush-baan and told Lakshman, "you stay here and guard Sita. She is dearer to Me than prana itself. There are great Rakshasas wandering about in the van, so be alert and guard her well."

Lakshmanji said, "Dev! Please listen to me – the one you are going after is not a deer; it is the Rakshasa Marich. He has come here to delude You. Please don't go after him."

Ramachandra said, “if it is Marich I will kill him, and if it is indeed a deer I will catch it bring it back to please Janaki. You take care of Sita.”

Saying this, Shri Rama went off after the mriga.’

Asambhavam he`mamrigasya janma tathaapi raamo lulubhe` mrigaaya,

praayah samaasannavipattikaale` dhiyoapi punsaamabhramalineebhavati.

The poets say that knowing that a deer cannot be made of gold, Rama saw it and was deluded by it. A manushya’s drishti becomes confused when misfortune is to descend on him; he believes things that can never be real, to be real, and behaves accordingly.

When we think that nobody will ever know what we are doing we make a big mistake. Everything gets known eventually.

Ramachandra is the only one who has nothing to hide.

Ityuktvaa prayayau raamo maayaamrigamanudrutah,

maayaa yadaashrayaa lokamohinee jagadaakritih. 7. 12

Nirvikaarashchidaatmaapi poornoapi mrigamanvagaat,

bhakttaanukampee bhagavaaniti satyam vacho harih. 7. 13

Kartum seetaapriyaarthaaya jaanannapi mrigam yayau,

anyathaa poornakaamasya raamasya viditaatmanah. 7. 14

Mrige`na vaa striyaa vaapi kim kaaryam paramaatmanah,

kadaachid drishyate`abhyaashe` kshanam dhaavati leeyate`. 7. 15

Drishyate` cha tato dooraade`vam raamamapaaharat,

tato raamoapi vignaaya raakshasoayamiti sfutam. 7. 16

Vivyaadha sharamaadaaya raakshasam mrigaroopinam,

papaata rudhiraakttaasyo maareechah poorvaroopadrik. 7. 17

Haa hatoasmi mahaabaaho traahi lakshmana maam drutam,

ityuktvaa raamavadvaachaa papaata rudhiraashanah. 7. 18

Maayaa yadaashrayaa lokamohinee jagadaakritih (12) – Bhagwan Rama is Himself, the ashray of the Maya that deludes the whole world! He is nirvikar, the paripoorna Chit-Atma, the sakshat Parameshwara. In spite of this, He ran after the deer.

Why did He do this?

Bhakttaanukampee bhagavaaniti satyam vacho harih (13) – Bhagwan showers kripa on His bhaktas.

This is absolutely true. Ramachandra knew that this golden hiran was a Maya-mriga. He ran after it to please Sitaji; and a chaya-Sita at that! She was not even the real Sita.

Ramachandra is poorna-kama; He has no desires that need to be fulfilled. He is sarvagna; what need had He of a hiran?

'The harin would let Ramachandra come close before it galloped off. Ramachandra recognized that the hiran was actually a Rakshasas who had assumed this form. He shot a baan at it. The Rakshasa fell, vomiting blood. He reverted to his original form and became Marich – *poonaroopadhrik* – and called out loudly in Rama's voice. *"Mahaabaaho lakshmana!* Come quickly! I'm dying!"

It sounded as though Rama was calling out for help. "Ha Sita! Ha Lakshman!"'

The sound carried clearly to the hut, but Marich whispered the last words, "He Rama", that nobody heard. Marich thought of Rama day and night. He could see nobody but Rama. Look; if even an agnani sees Rama, or utters His name at the time of death, he obtains Rama.

Yannaamaagnoapi manane` smritvaa tatsaamyamaapnuyaat,

kimutaagre` harim pashyamste`naiva nihatoasurah. 7. 19

Tadde`haaduthtthitam te`jah sarvalokasya pashyatah,

raamame`vaavishadde`vaa visamayam param yayuh. 7. 20

Kim karma kritvaa kim praaptah paatakee munihinsakah,

athavaa raaghavasyaayam naatra sanshayah. 7. 21

Raamabaane`na samviddhah poorvam raamamanusmaran,

bhayaatsarvam parityajya grihavittaadikam cha yat. 7. 22

Hridi raamam saddaa dhyaatvaa nirdhootaashe`shakalmashah,

ante` raame`na nihatah pashyan raamamavaapa sah. 7. 23

Dvijo vaa raakshaso vaapi paapee vaa dhaarmikoapi vaa,

tyajankale`varam raamam smritvaa yaati param padam. 7. 24

Iti te`anyonyamaabhaashya tato de`vaa divam yayuh,

raamastachchintayaamaasa mriyamaanoasuraadhamah. 7. 25

Haa lakshmane`ti madvaakyamanukurvanmamaara kim,

shrutvaa madvaakyasadrisham vaakyam seetaapi kim bhave`t. 7. 26

'A bright light came out of Marich's shareer and went into Rama's shareer. Those who saw this were all amazed, because Marich was a great paapi who had killed many Munis. What sat-karma could he have done, to obtain Rama?'

It is the greatness of Rama, and not any sat-karma of Marich, that this happened.

Since the time Marich had first been hit by Rama's baan, his fear of Rama had driven everything else out of his mind. He did dhyana of Rama all the time. His wrong tendencies were all washed away because of this. Ultimately, he was killed by Rama and he obtained Rama.

‘A person may be a Brahmin or he may be a Rakshasa; he may be a paapi or a punyatma. Whoever thinks of Rama at the time of death gets the param pada. The Devtas spoke about this among themselves, and went away.’

Goswami Tulsidasji has said that the drishti of a bhakta is such that he feels that everybody has prema for Bhagwan. Nobody is an enemy of Bhagwan in the eyes of a bhakta, because Bhagwan is present in all as the antaryami. Bhaktas feel that perhaps people behave as they do because they are prompted by the antaryami. That is why nobody is an abhakta in the eyes of a bhakta. Only a person who lacks bhakti sees another as being an abhakta.

The fact is there is nobody in whom Bhagwan does not abide, who is not an eternal dasa of Bhagwan, and who doesn’t do Bhagwan’s seva as prompted by Him. No such person exists. It is our own lack of proper understanding when we consider someone to be wicked or an abhakta.

Bhagwan Ramachandra saw the prema in Marich’s hriday – *antara pre`ma taasu taasu pahichaanaa* muni durlabha gati deena sujaanaa.

‘Bhagwan Rama thought about the reason Marich had, as he was dying, called out in His voice, like that. “He did it to deceive Sita and Lakshman, I’m sure,” thought Rama. He felt uneasy and decided to return to the hut as quickly as possible.

Iti chinataapareetaatmaa raamo dooraannyavartata,

seetaa tadbhaashitam shrutvaa maareechasya duraatmanah. 7. 27

Bheetaatidukhasamvignaa lakshmanam tvidamabraveet,

gachha lakshmana ve`ge`na bhraataa te`asurapeeditah. 7. 28

Haa lakshmane`ti vachanam bhraatuste` na shrunoshi kim,

taamaaha lakshmano de`vi raamavaakyam na tadbhave`t. 7. 29

Yah kashchidraakshaso de`vi mriyamaanoabraveedvachah,

raamastrailokyamapi yah kruddho naashayati kshanaat. 7. 30

When the voice of the wicked Marich reached Sitaji's ears she became nervous and frightened. She told Lakshman, "go, Lakshman! Run to Rama! Some Asura is giving Him pain! Didn't you hear Him call out to you for help?"

Lakshman tried to reassure her. "Devi," he said, "That was not Rama speaking. It was some Rakshasa imitating His voice as he was dying. I know fully well that if angered, Rama can destroy all three lokas in an instant! Why will Rama – who is worshipped by the Devtas – cry out in such a helpless manner?"

Sa katham deenavachanam bhaashate`amarapoojitah,

kruddhaa lakshmanamaalokya seetaa baashpavilochanaa. 7. 31

Praaha lakshmana durbuddhe` bhraaturvyasanamichchhasi,

pre`shito bharate`naiva raamanaashaabhikaankshinaa. 7. 32

Maam ne`tumaagatoasi tvam raamanaasha upasthite`,

na praapsyase` tvam maamadya pashya praanaanstyajaamyaham. 7. 33

Na jaanaateedrisham raamastvaam bhaaryaaharanodyatam,

raamaadanyam na sprishaami tvaam vaa bharatame`va vaa. 7. 34

Ityuktvaa badhyamaanaa saa svabaahubhyaam ruroda ha,

tachchhrtvaa lakshmanah karnau pidhaayaateeva dukhitah. 7. 35

Sitaji was filled with helpless anger. Her eyes filled with tears of rage.'

Look, people begin to talk wildly when overcome with anger. If the listener is a good-hearted, steady person he should not take words spoken in anger seriously. He should remain cool and do what he feels is right. If he is threatened or shouted at he should endure it with patience and no succumb to the temptation to retaliate.

‘Sitaji’s eyes filled with tears of frustration. She told Lakshman, “your buddhi had become wicked! You want to put your brother in danger. Has Bharat sent you with us, with orders to kill Rama and take me back with you? Do you all have a bad intention for me?”’

Maam ne`tumaagatoasi tvam raamanaasha upasthite` (33)

Goswami Tulsidasji has mentioned Sitaji’s talk as being *katu vachan* – harsh words. Actually, the buddhi becomes such that it is in keeping with what the future is to bring.

‘Sitaji said, “Lakshman! Know well that even if Rama is killed, you will not be able to obtain me. I will die first. Did Ramachandra know that you accompanied us to the van for the purpose of abducting His patni? I cannot touch any purush other than Rama; neither you nor Bharat!”

Sitaji began to cry bitterly, beating her chest in despair. Lakshman covered his ears with his hands, deeply distressed.

Maame`vam bhaashase` chandi dhik tvaam naashamupaishyasi,

ityuktvaa vanade`veebhyah samarpyam janakaatmajaam. 7. 36

Yayau dukhaatisamvigno raamame`va shanaih shanaih,

tatoantaram samaalokya raavano bhikshuve`shadhrik. 7. 37

Seetaasameepamagamatsfuraddandakamandaluh,

seetaa tamavalokyaashu natvaa sampoojya bhakttitah. 7. 38

Kandamoolafalaani dattvaa svaagatamabraveeet,

mune` bhunkshva falaadeeni vishramasva yathaasukham. 7. 39

Idaaneeme`va bhartaa me` hyaagamishyati te` priyam,

karishyati vishe`she`na tishtha tvam yadi rochate`.7 . 40

‘Lakshmanji said, ‘O Chandi! What you are saying is shameful – *dhik tvaam naashamupaishyasi* – shame on you for having such thoughts! You will be destroyed! You should not get into a frenzy of anger.” He

entrusted Sitaji lovingly to the Van-Devi and walked away slowly – *shanaih shanaih (37)* – in the direction Rama had gone, with a heavy heart.

Ravana came in the dress of a mendicant as soon as Lakshman was out of sight.'

Look, shanti endures when Bhagwan is with us, or when His bhaktas are with us. How can shanti prevail if neither is with us? Either the Acharya-Guru, or Bhagwan, should be with us if we want to live in peace.

'Ravana's danda and kamandalu were shining.'

There is one point here. The virakta Mahatmas don't bother to polish and keep their danda-kamandalu clean and shining. It is not in their nature to bother about their appearance, and waste time keeping their things burnished. A virakta's danda is generally a rough wooden staff and his kamandalu usually has clay clinging to it. To wrap a danda in a silk cloth and keep it polished takes too much time for a virakta Sadhu. When Ravana came to Sitaji, his danda and kamandalu were shining as new.

I used to keep both – a danda as well as a kamandalu – so I know about these things!

The Valmiki Ramayana says that Ravana came as a Tridandi Sadhu because he could not shave his head and cut off the choti worn by Brahmins. Had he done so he would have become a Sanyasi. A Sanyasi is not permitted to return to the Grihastha Ashram. Ravana was highly learned; he was fully aware of this rule.

Ravana flattered Sitaji with lavish praise, speaking about the beauty of her eyes, hair, nose, lips and figure. People who like to be praised get carried away when they are praised. This is a well-known fact. We should not get puffed up if somebody praises us.

Sampoojya bhakttitah (38)

‘Sitaji said, “please come, Maharaj.”

Sitaji insulted Lakshman and did Ravana’s puja.’

There is no mention here, of the well-known story of the *lakshmana re`khaa* – the line Lakshmanji made on the ground with his spiritual power, that would burn anybody who crossed over it, if they had a wicked intention.

‘Sitaji did Ravana’s puja with great bhakti. She offered him edible roots and fruits to eat.’

Manuji has said:

Apoojyaa yatra poojyante` poojyaanaam cha niraadarah,

trayatstatra pravartante` durbhiksham maranam bhayam.

If puja is done of someone who is not worthy of puja, and a person worthy of puja is insulted, famine, fear and death comes.

‘Janakiji told Ravana, “my patidev will be here in a little while. He will give you whatever you want. Sadhu Maharaj, if you wish, you can stay here.”’

I had gone to Mujaffarnagar some time back. One gentleman stood up during the katha and asked, ‘how is it that a pativrata and Sati like Janakiji showed respect to a Sadhu who lavished such praise of her face and figure? This seems very unlikely. It is completely contrary to her charitra.’

I explained that Janakiji has insulted Lakshmanji. When a manushya disdains his Guru, Acharya, or a Sant it is natural for impurity to come into his or her buddhi.

Bhikshuruvaacha

Kaa tvam kamalapatraakshi ko vaa bhartaa tavaanaghe`,

kimartham te` vaaso vane` raakshasase`vite`,

broohi bhadre` tatah sarvam svavrittantam nive`daye`. 7. 41

‘The Sadhu asked Sitaji, “O lotus-eyed lady, who are you? And, who is your pati? Why are you living in this van filled with Rakshasas? He Kalyani! Please tell me about yourself, and then I will tell you about myself.”

Seetovaacha

Ayodhyaadhipatih shreemaan raajaa dasharatho mahan,

tasya jye`shtha suto raamah sarvalakshanalakshitah. 7. 42

Tasyaaham dharmatah patnih seetaa janakanandinee,

tasya bhraataa kaneeyaanshcha lakshmano bhraatrivatsalah. 7. 43

Pituraagnaam puraskritya dandake` vastumaagatah,

chaturdasha samaastvaam tu gnaatumichchhaami me` vada. 7. 44

Sitaji said, “Shri Ramachandra is the eldest putra of Maharaja Dashrath of Ayodhya. He has all the virtues and good qualities. I am His patni, Sita, daughter of Raja Janak. My pati’s younger brother, Lakshman, has great prema for Rama. We have come to the Dandak van at the aagna of their father. We will go back after fourteen years are complete. I am interested in you, and your reason for coming here.”’

What was the need for Sitaji to talk at such length with an unknown man?

Bhikshuruvaacha

Paulastyatanayoaham tu raavano raakshasaadhipah,

tvatkaamaparitaptoaham tvaam ne`tu puramaagatah. 7. 45

Munive`she`na raame`na kim karishyasi maam bhaja,

bhunkshva bhogaanmayaa saardham tyja dukham vanodbhavam. 7. 46

‘“I am born in a very high lineage,” said Ravana. “Pulastya’s putra was Vishrava. I am Vishrava’s putra, Ravana. I am the Raja of the Rakshasas. The baan of kama for you has pieced me. I have come to take you to my city. What will you get from an ascetic like Rama? If you do my seva you will enjoy every kind of bhoga. Let go of the dukha of vanavas.”

Shrutvaa tadvachanam seetaa bheetaa kinchiduvaacha tam,

yadye`vam bhaashase` maan tvam naashame`shyasi raaghavaat. 7. 47

Aagamishyati raamoapi kshanam tishtha sahaanujah,

maam ko gharshayitum shaktto hare`rbhaaryaa shaso yathaa. 7. 48

Raamabaanairvibhinnastvam patishyasi maheetale`,

iti seetaavachah shrutvaa raavanah krodhamoorchhitah. 7. 49

Svaroopam darshayaamaasa mahaaparvatasannibham,

dashaasyam vinshatibhujam kaalame`ghasamadyutim. 7. 50

Taddrishtvaa vanade`vashcha bhootaani cha vitatrasuh,

tato vidaarya dharaneem nakhairuddhritya baahubhih. 7. 51

Tolayitvaa rathe` kshiptvaa yayau kshipram vihaayasaa,

haa raama haa lakshmane`ti rudatee janakaatmajaa. 7. 52

Fear filled Sitaji when she heard this, but she rebuked Ravana sharply. “Why are you talking like this? Ramachandra will be here any minute with His brother, and He will destroy you! Who can insult me with impunity? Can anybody insult the patni of a lion? You will shortly fall on to the ground, pierced by Rama’s baan.”

Ravan flew into a frenzied rage when he heard Sita’s words. He showed her his real form – a mountainous form with ten heads and twenty arms. He looked like a thunder cloud that would destroy the world. The Van Devi and other beings were all terrified at the sight of

Ravana. Ravana had unbelievable strength. He smote the earth with hands, and dug out a large slab with his nails. He raised this slab of earth from under Sitaji and lifted her on it, and put her onto his chariot without touching her. ‘

It is said that an Apasara called Punchikashtha was on her way to meet Brahmaji. She met Ravana on the road. He tore off her clothes and violated her. Brahmaji was very angry. He told Ravana, ‘you will die if you touch any lady without her consent.’ After this, Ravana could not touch any lady without her consent.

Bhayodvignamanaa deenaa pashyantee bhuvame`va saa,

shrutvaa tatkranditam seetaayaah pakshisattamah. 7 53

Jataayurutthitah sheeghram nagaagraatteekshnatunadakah,

tishtha tishthe`ti tam praaha ko gachchhati mamaagratah. 7. 54

Mushitvaa lokanaathasya bhaaryaam shoonyaadvanaalayaat,

shunako mantrapootam tvam purodaashamivaadhvare`. 7. 55

Ityuktvaa teekshnatunde`na choornayaamaasa tadratham,

vaahaanbibhe`da paadaabhyaam choornayaamaasa taddhanuh. 7. 56

After placing Sitaji on his ratha Ravana drove his chariot through the air by an aerial route towards Lanka. Janaki kept calling out ‘Ha Rama! Ha Lakshman!” helplessly.

Janakiji’s cries reached Jatayu who was sitting on the top of a hill, with his wings folded. He got up at once and challenged Ravana. “Where are you taking Sitaji? You have stolen the patni of the Lord of the world, the Lord of all the lokas! You did this when there was nobody else in the house, like a dog snatching the pure leftover items after a Yagna is completed.” Saying this, he pounced on Ravana’s ratha, shattering it and also Ravana’s dhanush.

Tatah seetaam parityajya raavanah khangamaadade`,

chichhe`da pakshau saamarshah pakshiraajasya dheematah. 7. 57

Papaata kinchichchhe`she`na praane`na bhuvi pakshiraat,

punaranyarathe`naashu seetaamaadaaya raavanah. 7. 58

Kroshayantee raamaraame`ti traataaram naadhigachhati,

haa raama haa jagannaatha maam na pashyasi dukhitaam.7 . 59

Rakshasaa neeyamaanaam svaam bhaaryaam mochaya raaghava,

haa lakshmana mahaabhaagaa traahi maamaparaadhineem. 7. 60

Vaakshare`na hatastvam me` kshantumarhasi de`vara,

itye`vam kroshamaanaam taam raamaadamanashankayaa. 7. 61

jagaam vaayuve`ge`na seetaamaadaaya satvarah,

vihaayasaa neeyamaanaa seetaapashyadadhomukhee. 7. 62

Ravana put Sita on one side and drew his sword. He cut off Jatayu's wings. The wingless bird fell on to the ground, utterly helpless. Ravana placed Sitaji on another ratha and flew off.

Sitaji kept calling out desperately, "Ha Rama! Ha Jagannath! Don't You see how dukhi I am? This Rakshasa is carrying me off. Ha Lakshman! He mahabhag – I am your offender! Please protect me. I wounded you with the baan of my vani. My dear brother-in-law, please forgive me!" Sitaji kept weeping and calling out for help, and Ravana continued to drive his chariot in the air with all possible speed.

Parvataagre` sthitaanpancha vaanaraanvaarijaananaa,

uttareeyaardhakhande`na vimuchyaabharanaadikam. 7. 63

Badhvaa chikshe`pa raamaaya kathayantviti parvate`,

tatah samudramullanghya lankaam gatvaa sa raavanah. 7. 64

Svaantahpure` rahasye`taamashokavipine`akshipat,

raakshaseebhih parivritaam maatribuddhyaanvapaalayat. 7. 65

Krishaatideenaa parikarmavarjitaa dukhe`na shushyadvadanaativihvalaa,

haa raama raame`ti vilapyamaanaa seetaa sthitaa raakshasavrindamadhye`. 7. 66

This is wonderful. Ravana's personal garden was very secluded. It had ashoke trees. Ravana kept Sitaji there, in his personal Ashoke Vatika. It is not that he caught her by the hand he lifted her along with the slab of earth he had used since the time he kidnapped her. He told the Rakshasis there to guard her. *Maatribuddhyaanvapaalayat* – he felt she was like his mother.'

Goswamiji has also given the same indication:

Mana manha charana vandi sukha maanaa.

(Ravana mentally bowed at Sitaji's feet.)

Ravana is Jay-Vijay of Vaikuntha, so we have to accept that he and Kumbhakarana would have some sanskaras of Vaikuntha in their hriday. No matter how wicked Ravana is he would have the feeling of Laxmiji being the mother, and Sitaji is Laxmiji. The feeling is not evident, but it is there in seed form.

'Mother Sita became deeply distressed. She refused to groom herself. Her face became sad and wan. She uttered Rama's name continuously as she sat in the Ashoke Vatika surrounded by Rakshasis.

Aranya Kanda

The Eighth Sarga.

The episode of Jatayu.

Raamo maayaavinam hatvaa raakshasam kaamaroopinam,

pratasthe` svaashramam gantum tato dooraaddadarsha tam. 8. 1

Aayaantam lakshmanam deenam mukhe`na parishushyataa,

raaghavashchintayaamaasa svaatmanye`va mahaamatih. 8. 2

Lakshmanastanna jaanaati maayaaseetaam mayaa kritaam,

gnaatvaapye`nam vanchayitvaa shochaami praakrito yathaa. 8. 3

Yadyaham virato bhootvaa tooshneem sthaasyaami mandire`,

tadaa raakshasakoteenaam vadhopaayah katham bhave`t. 8. 4

Yadi shochaami taam dukhasantaptah kaamuko yathaa,

tadaa krame`naanuchinvanseetaam yaasye`asuraalayam,

raavanam sakulam hatvaa seetaamagnau sthitaam punah. 8. 5

Maaiva sthaapitaam neetvaa yaataayodhyaamatandritah,

aham manushyabhaave`na jaatoasmi brahmanaarthitah. 8. 6

Manushyabhaavamaapannah kinchitkaalam vasaami kau,

tato maayaamanushyasya charitam me`anushrinvataam. 8. 7

Rama killed Marich, who was kama-roop. A kama-roop Rakshasa is one who changes his form as he wants – *raakshasam kaamaroopinam.*

Valmikiji has written that a person who changes his form according to the vasana in his mana is a Rakshasa. He stays like a manushya even if he is a Devta or a Daitya at heart. The point is, the shareer of a Devta or a Rakshasa becomes according to what their mana is. They can change their form by the dhyana they do.

You would have heard about this in the 'Hanuman-natak'. Kumbhakaran once told Ravana, 'why don't you assume Rama's form and approach Sita? She will be deceived if you do this.'

'I did Rama's dhyana and changed into His form,' said Ravana, 'but the wish to deceive Sita left me as soon as I became Rama-roop, because Rama's virtues manifested in my jeevan.'

'Rama killed Marich and started on His way back to the Ashram. He saw Lakshman coming towards Him. Lakshmanji's face was pallid. Ramachandra thought, "Lakshman does not know that the Sita who has been abducted is a chaya-Sita."'

Here, we have to keep in mind that the Ishwara is always sarvagna and the jeeva is always alpagna. Only the Ishwara is omniscient; no jeeva can be all-knowing. The entire Gnan of the Ishwara can never come into a jeeva. The Vedantis describe that by negating the Ishwaratva and the jeevatva, they accept the oneness of both the Ishwara and the jeeva only in the *gnaapti;* not in the *gnaatritva*. Gnatritva is different from gnapti.

Jo sabake` raha gnaana e`ka rasa, eesahin jeevahin kahahu bhe`da kasa – if the Gnan of the jeeva was the same as the Gnan of the Ishwara, what would be the difference in them?

Rama's Gnan and Lakshman's Gnan cannot be the same.

It is also shown in this episode that Rama knows that the Sitaji's carried off by Ravana was actually a Maya-Sita, but Lakshmanji did not know this. Rama felt it was best to keep Lakshmanji ignorant about this, so He began to lament, with the thought,' if I remain unaffected by Sita being abducted the leela of killing Ravana won't take place. I will pretend to be full of sorrow – *dukha-santaptah kaamuko yathaa* – I will behave like any pati who has asakti for his patni. '

This episode also shows the strategy of war – the yuddha-neeti. It was a good strategy to make the enemy think that Ramachandra had

become a broken man because of the dukha of losing His patni, and that He had no idea where Sitaji had been taken, or who took her.

Rama made strenuous efforts to find Sita. Ravana was mislead into believing that He was still searching for Sita. In the meantime, Rama gathered His army of vanars. To ensure that everybody concerned believed that He was still looking for Sita it was essential that Lakshman was kept in the dark as well.

'"Krame`naanuchinvanseetaam – we will seek Sita step by step and reach the palace of the Rakshasa. We will destroy Ravana's whole clan, retrieve Sita from the Agni, and go back to Ayodhya with her*,"* thought Rama. "Since I have assumed a manushya form at Brahma's prayer, I will display grief like an ordinary man whose has lost his patni. Those who do shravan of My Maya-manushya leela will get Mukti without making any other effort."'

The fact is that this swarup of the jeevatma is not a manushya either; it is also the swarup of a Maya-manushya, due to avidya; else, how can this shareer composed of bones-flesh-skin-excreta- urine etc be the Atma?

Mukttih syaadaprayaase`na bhakktimaargaanuvartinaam,

nishchityaivam tadaa dristvaa lakshmanam vaakyamabraveet. 8 8

Kimarthamaagatoasi tvam seetaam tykttvaa mama priyaam,

neetaa vaa bhakshitaa vaapi raakshasairjanakaatmajaa. 8. 9

Lakshmanah praanjalih praaha seetaayaa durvacho rudan,

haa lakshmane`ti vachanam raakshasokttam shrutam tayaa. 8. 10

Tvadvaakyasadrisham shurtvaa maam gachchhe`ti tvaraabraveet,

rudantee saa mayaa prokttaa de`vi raakshasabhaashitam. 8. 11

Ne`dam raamasya vachanam svasthaa bhava shuchismite`,

itye`vam saantvitaa saadhvee mayaa provaacha maam punah,

yadukttam durvacho raama na vaachyam puratastava. 8. 12

Rama saw Lakshman coming towards Him. “Oh, Lakshman!” He said, “why have you let Sita alone and come here? She is very dear to Me; what if some Rakshasa carries her off and eats her?”

Lakshman folded his hands. Tears ran down his face. “Sita heard the voice of the Rakshasa and believed it to be Your voice,” he said. “I tried my best to convince her that it was a Rakshasa imitating Your voice, so she should not be alarmed. She refused to listen to me. She told me things that I cannot repeat to You. I shut my ears and came to get Your darshan.”

Karnau pidhaaya nirgatya yaatoaham tvaam sameekshitum,

raamastu lakshmanam praaha tathaapyanuchittam kritam. 8. 13

Tvayaa streebhaashitam satyam kritvaa tyakttaa shubhaananaa,

neetaa vaa bhakshitaa vaapi raakshasainaanna sanshayah. 8. 14

Iti chintaaparo raamah svaashramam tvarito yayau,

tatraadrishtvaa janakajaam vilalaapaatidukhitah. 8. 15

Haa priye` kva gataasi tvam naasi poorvavadaashrame`,

athavaa madvimohaartham leelayaa kva vileeyase`. 8. 16

Ityaachivanvanam sarva naapashyajjaanakeem tadaa,

vanade`vyah kutah seetaam bruvantu mama vallabhaam. 8. 17

Mrigaashcha pakshino vrikshaa darshayantu mama priyaam,

itye`vam vilapanne`va raamah seetaam na kutrachit. 8. 18

Sarvagnah sarvathaa kvaapi naapashyadraghunandanah,

aanandoapyanvashochattaamachaloapyanudhaavati. 8. 19

Nirmamo nirahankaaroapyakhandaanandaroopavaan,

mama jaaye`ti seete`ti vilalaapaatidukhitah. 8. 20

Rama told Lakshman, “no doubt she said bad things to you, Lakshman, but it was not proper for you to leave her alone. If somebody talks irrationally in anger we should not take them seriously.

How can you accept the things women say as being true? Women say things that make brothers quarrel. It leads to misfortune when tears accompany wild talk that is taken seriously.”’

Look, my brother, this is a matter of the occasion these statements are made on. When the time comes I will tell you about the virtues of women. What Rama says here is only for this occasion.

‘”You believed the words of a stree and left Janaki? Some Rakshasa could have carried her off and devoured her – that is almost certain!” said Rama. They went as fast as they could to the Ashram. Janaki was nowhere to be seen. Rama began to wail piteously.’

This episode is described beautifully in the ‘Hanuman-natak’. It describes how Rama went round asking trees and creepers, animals and birds, if they had seen Janaki. He asked the Van Devi if she had seen where Sita had gone.

Ramachandra is sarvagna, but He cannot see Janaki anywhere. He is anand-swarup, but He grieves and weeps for Janaki. He is unmoving, but He runs. He is nirmama – free of mamata – but He is attached to Janakiji. He is nirahankara – there is no ahankara in Him – and He is akhand-anand-swarup, but He becomes dukhi and weeps, saying, ‘O My patni, O My Sita!’ This is how Ramachandra Bhagwan behaves because He has accepted Maya, even though there is no asakti in Him.

In the Valmiki Ramayana at every episode where Rama behaves like a manushya, it is because Valmiki focused on the charitra, and Rama is shown as a manushya with exceptional qualities. Bhagwan Rama is projected in a way that makes stupid people think He has asakti. However, Tattvagnanis know that there is no asakti in Ramachandra.

In the Bhakti-dominated Ramayanas it is clear that Rama is Bhagwan, He is sarvagna, and He is the swarup of anand. He behaves like a manushya because it is a Bhakti-granth – its purpose is to develop bhakti for Bhagwan. The purpose of all Bhakti-granths is that Rama should remain as Bhagwan in the mana of the shrotas.

Whenever there is any scope for doubt – whenever Bhagwan's bhagavatta become obscure – the author corrects it by pointing out, 'look! This is the sakshat Bhagwan! Don't forget that He is not a manushya!

E`vam maayaamanucharannasakttoapi raghoottamah,

aasaktta iva moodhaanaam bhaati tattvavidaam na hi. 8. 21

E`vam vichinvansakalam vanam raamah salakshmanah,

bhagnam ratham chhatrachaapam koobaram patitam bhuvi. 8. 22

Drishtvaa lakshmanamaahe`dam pashya lakshmana ke`nachit,

neeyamaanaam janakajaam tam jitvaanyo jahaara taam. 8. 23

Tatah kanchidbhuvo bhaagam gatvaa parvatasannibham,

rudhiraakttavapurdrishtvaa raamo vaakyamathaabraveet. 8. 24

E`sha vai bhakshayitvaa taam jaanakeem shubhadarshannam,

she`te` viviktte`atitriptah pashya hanmi nishaacharam. 8. 25

Chaapamaanaya sheeghram me` baanam cha raghunandna,

tachchhrutvaa raamavachanam jataayuh praaha bheetavat. 8. 26

Maam na maaraya bhadram te` mriyamaanam svakarmanaa,

aham jataayuste` bhaaryaahaarinam samanudrutah. 8. 27

Raavanam tatra yuddham me` babhoovaarivimardana,

tasya vaahaan ratham chaapa chhittvaaham te`na ghaatitah. 8. 28

Patitoasmi jagannaatha praanaanstyakshyaami pashya ma. 8. 29

‘Rama searched in the van frantically. He saw the wheel of a broken chariot, a dhanush and axel strewn on the ground.

“Look, Lakshman!” He said. “It seems that the Rakshasa who abducted Janakiji was challenged and beaten by another Rakshasa, who took her away from him.”’

When even Ramji jumps to a hasty conclusion, it is a warning that we should be very careful to ascertain the facts before we act.

‘Then Ramachandra saw Griddharaj Jatayu lying on the ground. He was ready to kill him. He asked Lakshman to give Hi his dhanush-baan quickly. Jatayu heard Him and said, “Maharaj! I am Jatayu. I challenged and fought with the Rakshasa who was carrying off Your patni. I shattered his horses and his ratha and his dhanush-baan, but he cut off my wings and flew off in another ratha. Please don’t kill me. I am already dying.”

Tachchhrutvaa raaghavo deenam kanthapraanam dadarsha ha,

hastaabhyaam samsparshan raamo dukhaashruvritalochanah. 8. 30

Jataayo broohi me` bhaaryaa ke`na neetaa shubhaananaa,

matkaaryaartham hatoasi tvamato me` priyabaandhavah. 8. 31

Jataayuh sannayaa vaachaa vaktraadrakttam samudvaman,

uvaacha raavano raama raakshaso bheemavikramah. 8. 32

Aadaaya maithileem seetaam dakshinaabhimukho yayau,

ito vakttum na me` shakttih praanaanstyakshyaami te`gratah. 8. 33

Dishtyaa drishtoasi raama tvam mriyamaane`na me`anagha,

paramaatmaasi vishnustvam maayaamanujaroopadhrik. 8. 34

Antakaale`api drishtvaa tvaam mukttoaham raghusattama,

hastaabhyaam sprisha maam raama punaryaasyaami te` padam. 8. 35

Ramachandra saw the pitiable condition of Jatayu. He touched him with His hand, picked him up and put him on His shoulder. Tears spilled from His eyes.'

Jataayu dhoori jataana se` jhrin – Shri Ramachandra Bhagwan wiped the dust on Jatayu's shareer with His jata.

'Jatayu' means, until Rama's jata touched the shareer of the bird, he was in the form of a bird. After Bhagwan's jata touched him, he became Mukta.

'Ramachandra asked Jatayu, "you died doing My work. You are My beloved brother, Jatayu. Tell Me, who has abducted Sita?"

Jatayu was barely able to speak. Blood poured from his beak. With a great effort he said, "Ravana" and pointed to the south to indicate the direction in which Ravana had gone. "I don't have the strength to talk," he said. "I will die in front of You. It is a great good fortune that I am getting Your darshan at the time of mrityu. You are the sakshat Paramatma. You are Vishnu."'

The fact is that Jatayu gave Rama the information that Sita had been abducted by Ravana, and that he had gone towards Lanka in the south. All this was planned since a long time. The 'Mahavir Charitra' says that when Ramachandra went with Vishwamitra to Janakpur, Ravana had already stationed Tadaka, Subahu and Marich there. They were pawns in Ravana's strategy. Manthara had been tutored by Ravana and placed in Ayodhya. Bali had been placed in Kishkindha. Khar, Dushan and other Rakshasas had been put in the Dandakaranya to try to kill Rama, and keep Ravan informed about His movements.

Ramachandra knew that Ravana had the information that his death would be at Rama's hands. He also knew that Ravana had kidnapped His mother and father in an attempt to kill them so that Ramachandra would not be born. Ravana had kept Manthara at the Kingdom of Kaikeyi's father well in advance. When Rama broke Shankarji's dhanush and won Sita's hand n marriage, Ravana went to Parashuram.

‘Maharaj,’ he said, ‘both you and I are disciples of Shankarji. His dhanush has been broken, but you are not doing anything about it.’

The ‘Mahavir Charitra’ has a similar story. In the drama, ‘Uttar Ramacharitam’ and also in ‘Mahavir Charitam’ Bhavabhuti has written that Rama knew that it was Ravana who had abducted Sitaji and taken her to Lanka. Jatayu had also given Him this information. Rama did not reveal this to anybody. He kept it a secret. When Hanumanji went to Lanka and met Sitaji, the army of vanars was gathered.

‘Jatayu said, “I have got Your darshan in my last moments. I have become Mukta. Please put Your hand on my head.”

Tathe`ti raamah pasparsha tadanaagam paaninaa smayan,

tatah praanaanparityajya jataayuh patito bhuvi. 8. 36

Raamastamanushochitvaa bandhuvatsaashrulochanah,

lakshmane`na samaanaayya kaashthaani pradadaaha tam. 8. 37

Snaatvaa dukhe`na raamoapi lakshmane`na samanvitah,

hatvaa vane` mrigam tatra maansakhandaansamantatah. 8. 38

Shaadvale` praakshipadraamah prithak prithagane`kadhaa,

bhakshantu pakshinah sarve` tripto bhavatu pakshiraat. 8. 39

Ityuktvaa raaghavah praaha jataayo gachchha matpadam,

matsaroopyam bhajasvaadya sarvalokasya pashyatah. 8. 40

Tatoanantarame`vaasau divyaroopadharah shubhah,

vimaanavaramaaruhya bhaasvaram bhaanusannibham. 8. 41

Bhagwan stroked Jatayu’s shareer tenderly. He even forgot Janakiji in His concern for Jatayu. He began to smile at Jatayu. Jatayu’s chitta filled with the sight of Ramachandra smiling at him with prema.

When Jatayu left his shareer Ramachandra told Lakshman to bring wood for Jatayu’s chita. He did Jatayu’s last rites the way a son does

them for his pita. Then He bathed and did daan for Jatayu. After all the rituals were completed Rama told Jatayu, “go to My swarup, to Vaikuntha. You will get the same swarup as I have.”’

Dhari hari roopaa – the giddha got the same roop as Bhagwan. “Go to My dham now,” said Bhagwan Shri Ramachandra. Jatayu climbed into the viman that shone brightly, like the sun.

Geedha adhama khala aamisha bhogee,

gati deenha je`hi jaachata jogee.

Bhagwan gave Jatayu the roop that great Yogis ask for, even though Jatayu was a lowly bird who ate flesh.

Shankhachakragadaapadmakireetavarabhooshanaih,
dyotayansvaprakaashe`na peetaambaradharoamalah. 8. 42

Chaturbhih paarshadairvishnostaadrishairabhipoojitah,

stooyamaano yogoganai raamamaabhaashya satvarah,

kritaanjaliputo bhootvaa tushtaava raghunandanam. 8. 43

The griddha now had four arms like Vishnu Bhagwan, with a Shankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma in his hands. There was a crown on his head, and he had other ornaments as well. A pitambara draped his shoulder. He shone brightly. Four parshads of Vishnu were with him. He came and stood before Ramachandra with folded hands, and did Bhagwan’s stuti. The Yogis did Jatayu’s stuti and Jatayu did Ramachandra’s stuti.’

Swarup-Gnan gives oneness; svabhava-Gnan gives sharanagati, and mahatmya-Gnan gives shuddha bhakti. When a person has mahatmya-Gnan he has Gnan about Bhagwan’s gunas, and thinks about Bhagwan constantly. There is a vivek even in this, however.

When a person analyses something there is no consideration of his own preference or prejudice. Shraddha comes from listening to bhaktas and Sants talk about Bhagwan. The unbroken flow of thoughts

about Bhagwan is achieved by humming His name and bhajans. Sharanagati comes when a bhakta gets Bhagwan's sakshatkara.

Jataayuruvaacha

Aganitagunamaprame`yamadyam
sakalajagatsthitaisamyamaadihe`tum,

uparamaparamam paraatmabhootam satatamaham pranatoasmi raamachandram. 8. 44

Naravaramanisham natosmi raamam varadamaham varachaapabaanahastam. 8. 45

Tribhuvanakamaneeyaroopameedyam
ravishatabhaasurameehitapradaanam,

sharanadamanisham suraagamoole` kritanilayam raghunandanam prapadye`. 8. 46

Bhavavipinadavaagnimaadhe`yam bhavamukhadaivatadaivatam dayaalum,

danujapatisahasrakotinaasham ravitanayaasadrisham harim prapadye`. 8. 47

Aviratibhavabhaavanaatidooram bhavavimukhairmunibhih sadaiva drishyam,

bhavajaladhisutaaranaanghripotam sharanamaham raghunandanam prapadye`. 8. 48

Girishagirisutaamanonivaasam
girivaradhaarinameehitaabhiraamam,

suravaradadanuje`ndrase`vitaanghrim suravaradam raghunaayakam prapadye`. 8. 49

Paradhanaparadaaravarjitaanaam paragunabhootishu tushtamaanasaanaam,

parahitanirataatmanaam suse`vyam raghuvaramambujalochanam prapadye`. 8. 50

Smitaruchiravikaasitaananaabjamatisulabham
suraraajaneelaneelam,

sitajalaruhachaarune`trashobham raghupatimeeshagurorgurum prapadye`. 8. 51

Harikamalajashambhuroopame`daattvamiha vibhaasi gunatrayaanuvrittah,

raviriva
jalapooritodapaatre`shvamarapatistutipaatrameeshameede`. 8. 52

Ratipatishatakotisundaraangam
shatapathagocharabhaavanaavidooram,

yatipatihridaye` sadaa vibhaatam raghupatimaartiharam prabhum prapadye`. 8. 53

'In his stuti, the griddha said, "Your gunas are innumerable; they cannot be measured by any method. You are the adi Atma of this srishti, but the people of this sansara don't know it. You, the adi-Atma, is also the anta of this srishti, as well as all that is in-between. It is this Atma that illuminates the srishti from its adi to its anta.

This entire jagat is the cause of the sthiti, and of samyam. The sadhana for obtaining You is to be *uparaama* – up means close, and so, close to You, Rama, and disinterested in the sansara. Lakshman is the most uprama person because he knows no one but You.

The best method for obtaining Prabhu is to have interest only in Rama and nothing else. Rama is the Atma of all. I do pranam at His feet. Lakshmanji looks at Him continuously. Rama removes the dukha of all.

Come, let me do Bhagwan's aradhana. His roop is beloved in all the three lokas. It is as effulgent as a hundred suns. He protects those who take His sharan. He sits behind the spot in your hriday where prema

arises, and He accepts your prema; that is a separate matter. It is a matter of bhava that Prabhu is in front of us, receiving our prema.

Prabhu is present where the vritti of prema rises in the hriday. He is in the form of the adhishthana. He is the form of Gnan, and is the support of prema. Furthermore, it is Bhagwan who illuminates your prema and makes you aware of it. It is His svabhava that He never lets go of the vritti. It is His swarup that He stays even without this vritti. This is the method of Vedanta.

Bhagwan's naam sets fire to the forest of this sansara and turns it into ashes. He is the Devta of the great Devtas like Shankar and others. Daya is His svabhava, and He destroys thousands of Asuras.

No matter how many vikars there are in your mana – or how many doshas you have – they will all be removed if you keep your eyes on Him. Doing His chintan is different from doing the chintan of the sansara.

Shiva and the other Devtas look at Him. Bhagwan's charan are the ship that can carry you across the sea of this sansara. I take the sharan of Raghunandan.

Shri Ramachandra stays in the mana of Gauri and Girish. His bhaktas think that He is very beautiful. The Devtas and the Daityas all do His seva. I take sharan of that Raghunandan.

The people who are free of desire for the wealth and wife of another, are pleased when others flourish, and when they see virtues in others, can do the best seva of the lotus-eyed Raghuvara Ramachandra.

Shri Ramachandra always has a smile on His face. He makes it easy for His bhakta to obtain Him. His eyes are like dark blue sapphires filled with prema. Shankar is the Guru of all – I bow down to that Shankar.

It is the one Paramatma who manifests as Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. If there are many vessels filled with water, the sun is

reflected in each vessel. In the same way, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh are like separate vessels in which the Atma-surya is reflected.

Bhagwan Ramachandra's shareer is as beautiful as a million Ratipatis – meaning Kamadevas!"'

This description is very similar to the description of the swarup of the Paramatma given in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

'"There is neither east nor west in the Paramatma; neither before nor after, neither outside nor inside. His swarup is *tad e`tad brahm.* He is always visible in the hriday of a Mahatma. I take sharan in that Prabhu.

Itye`vam stuvatastasya prasannoabhoodradhoottamah,

uvaacha gachchha bhadram te` mama vishnoh param padam. 8. 54

Shrunoti ya idam stotram likhe`dvaa niyatah pathe`t,

sa yaati mama saaroopyam marane` matsmritim labhe`t. 8. 55

Iti raaghavabhaashitam tadaa shrutavaan harshasamaakulo dvijah,

raghunandanasaamyamaasthitah prayayau brahmasupoojitam padam. 8. 56

Ramji was very pleased with Gandharvaraj. "You will obtain My param pada," He said.

Any person who takes the ashray of this stotra gets Bhagwan's *saaroopya* – his form becomes just like Bhagwan's. He thinks of Bhagwan at the time of his mrityu.'

Jatayu listened with great anand everything Ramachandra said to him. His form became just like Rama's. It is Rama's svabhava that He does not keep any bhakta any less; He makes them like Himself, because He has prema for all who have prema for Him. He considers Mahatmas to be greater than He is.

Aranya Kanda

The Ninth Sarga.

The killing of Kabandha.

Tato raamo lakshmane`na jagaama vipinaantaram,

punardukham samaashritya seetaanve`shanatatparah. 9. 1

Tatraadbhutasamaakaaro raakshasah pratyadrishyata,

vakshasye`va mahaavaktrashchakshuraadivivarjitah. 9. 2

Baahoo yojanamaatre`na vyaapritau tasya rakshasah,

kabandho naama daitye`ndrah sarvasattvavihinsakah. 9. 3

Tadvaahvormadhyade`she` tau charantau raamalakshmanau,

dadarshaturmahaasattvam tadvaahuparive`shthitau. 9. 4

'Rama and Lakshmana went further into the van. While He was with Jatayu Rama displayed sukha, but after Jatayu's departure, He displayed dukha again.'

It is we who summon sukha and dukha. You have to see which you prefer; which you choose to invite and hold on to. Neither sukha nor dukha are your family members; they are borrowed feelings. If you call sukha you feel sukhi; if you call dukha you feel dukhi.

'Ramachandra decided, "enough of sukha; let dukha come." So dukha came.

"Let us look for Sita, now," said Ramachandra. They went further, looking for any sigh of Sitaji. They saw a Rakshasa who had a very strange form. He had no eyes and no ears. His mouth was in his chest. His arms were more than one mile long.'

He represents Karma!

Seths tell me sometimes, ‘I have a very good income, Maharaj. Money comes in big quantities. I don’t know what will happen to all this wealth. I invest it and get more wealth! I have no son. I have no idea of what will happen to the wealth when I am dead.’

Several million rupees were caught from a Seth in Mumbai. He came to me. ‘What will happen, Maharaj?’ He asked. ‘I don’t have any children. There is no place in the house for keeping the money.’ I suggested that he should use it for doing some charity, but that did not appeal to him. The money was later taken away by people he had cheated.

The mouth of such people is also in their chest. They neither see nor hear about anything, except how to accumulate wealth. They don’t use their *gnaane`ndriya* – sense organs – and have no bhoga; only a long reach to catch whatever comes within their range. Such people are called ‘Kabandh’ – ‘k’ + ‘bandh’. There is nothing like sukha in their jeevan.

It is seen that a manushya becomes dukhi if he gets involved in the problem of another person. However, that dukha becomes lighter if some dukha comes into his own jeevan.

Raamah provaacha vihasanpashya lakshmana raakshasam,

shirahpaadaviheenoayam yasya vakshasi chaananam. 9. 5

Baahubhyaam labhyate` yadyattattadbhakshan sthito dhruvam,

aavaamapye`tayorbaahvormadhye` sankalitau dhruvam. 9. 6

Gantumanyatra maargo na drishyate` raghunandana,

kim kartavyamitoasmaabhiridaaneem bhakshaye`tsa nau. 9. 7

Lakshmanastamuvaache`dam kim vichaare`na raaghavah,

aavaame`kaikamavyagrau chhindyaavaasya bhujau dhruvam. 9. 8

Tathe`ti raamah khange`na bhujam dakshinamachchhinat,

tathaiva lakshmano vaamam chchhe`da bhujamanjasaa. 9. 9

Tatoativismito daityah kau yuvaam surapungavau,

madvaahuchchhe`dakau loke` divi de`ve`shu vaa kutah. 9. 10

'Rama saw the strange creature and said, "Lakshman, we are in the clutches of somebody's arms. This creature has no head and no feet. His mouth is in his chest, and he is drawing us towards it. What should we do? There is no way we can escape."'

Karma sometimes wants to bind even the Ishwara! Our most staunch adherents of karma are the believers of the Poorva Mimansa philosophy. They do not believe in the Ishwara. They say, 'we will create the Ishwara by or karmas. Our jajaman is the Ishwara.'

'Lakshmanji said, "Maharaj, don't give any more thought to this – we must chop off the hands with which karma is done."

Rama cut off the right hand and Lakshman cut off the left hand.

The Rakshasa asked, "who are you? Are you Devtas or are you Asuras?"

Tatoabraveeddhasannaiva raamo raajeevalochanah,

ayodhyaadhipatih shreemaan raajaa dasharatho mahan. 9. 11

Raamoaham tasya putroasau bhraataa me` lakshmanah sudheeh,

mama bhaaryaa janakajaa seetaa trailokyasundaree. 9. 12

Aavaam mrigayayaa yaatau tadaa ke`naapi rakshasaa,

neetaam seetaa vichinvantau chaagatau ghorakaanane`. 9. 13

Baahubhyaam ve`shtitaavatra tava praanarirakshayaa,

chhinnau tava bhujau tvam cha ko vaa vikataroopaghrik. 9. 14

Rama smiled and said, "we are the sons of Dashrath, Raja of Ayodhya. I am Rama and this is My brother, Lakshman. Sita – the most beautiful woman in all the three lokas – is My patni. Some Rakshasa carried her

off when we were out hunting. We are looking for her. We had to cut off your hands because you caught us. Now, tell Me who you are."

Kabandha uvaacha

Dhanyoaham yadi raamastvamaagatoasi mamaantikam,

puraa gandharvaraajoaham roopayauvanadarpitah. 9. 15

Vicharaillokamakhilam varanaareemanoharah,

tapasaa brahmano labdhamavadhyatvam raghoottama. 9. 16

Ashtaavakrah munim drishtvaa kadaachidahasam puraa,

kruddhe`asaavaaha dushta tvam raakshaso bhava durmate`. 9. 17

Ashtaavakrah punah praaha vandito me` dayaaparah,

shaapasyaantam cha me` praaha tapasaa dyotitaprabhah. 9. 18

Tre`taayuge` daasharathirbhootvaa naaraayanah svayam,

aagamishyati te` baahoo cchidye`te` yojanaayatau. 9. 19

Te`na shaapaadvinirmuktto bhavishyasi yathtaa puraa,

iti shaptoahamadraaksham raakshaseem tanumaatmanah. 9. 20

Kabandh said, "Oh! You are Rama! I am blessed! I am the Raja of the Gandharvas."'

You will notice that most of the shaaps given to Gandharvas are those of getting frightful forms. Gandharvas have great vanity about their own beauty; this abhiman is taken away by the shaap. You can observe this in all the Puranas. Some Gandharva is made into a python, some into a Shudra, or some other ugly form. The Mahatmas give such shaaps to shatter their abhiman about their beauty.

'Kabandh said, "I used to steal the mana of beautiful women. They developed prema for me. I was intoxicated by my youth and beauty. Brahmaji had given me a vara that nobody could kill me.

One day, I met Ashtavakraji. I began to alugh at his crooked form. This made him very angry, and he gave me a shaap. 'Become a Rakshasa!' I caught his feet in repentance."'

Look; a Mahatma's anger is short-lived. It never lasts long.

'"Ashtavakraji told me, 'go; when Rama meets you in the Treta Yuga He will cut off your hands. Then, you will become free of my shaap.' Today, I have got Your darshan, Maharaj! I will now leave this Rakshasa shareer and go to my future."

Kadaachidde`vaaraajaanamabhyaadravamaham rushaa,

soapi vajre`na maam raama shirode`she`abhyataadayat. 9. 21

Tadaa shiro gatam kushim paadau cha raghunandana,

brahmadattavaraanmrityurnaabhoonme` vajrataadanaat. 9. 22

Mukhaabhaave` katham jeeve`dayamityamaraadhipam,

oochuh sarve` dayaavishtaa maam vilokyaasyavarjitam. 9. 23

Tato maam praaha maghavaa jathare` te` mukham bhave`t,

baahoo te` yojanaayaamau bhavishyata ito vraja. 9. 24

Ityukttoatra vasannityam baahubhyaam vanagocharaan,

bhakshayaamyadhunaa baahoo khanditau me` tvayaanagha. 9. 25

Itah param maam shvabhraasye` nikshipaagneenghanaavrite`,

agninaa dahyamaanoaham tvayaa raghukulottama. 9. 26

In-between I attacked Indra, saying that I would devour him. He threw his vajra at my head; my head and my legs were pushed into my stomach. People felt sorry for me, wondering how I would eat. The Devtas prayed to Indra for me. Indra said, 'let your mouth be in your stomach. Everybody eats from the top and the food goes down to the stomach. Your food will go straight into your stomach,'"'

This means that Kabandh could not taste what he ate. A person gets the taste of food when the food is put on the tongue, because the taste-buds are on the tongue. Kabandh's food would go straight to his stomach.

There are people who become so engrossed in their work that they don't get the taste the food they eat. You may have heard about the Seth who would ask his servant, 'have I had my lunch?' The servant would say, 'yes, Sir, you had it an hour ago.' The Seth would go on working and the servant ate the luch sent for the Seth from the house!

Thus, people forget everything when they become obsessed by their work. They fail to notice things that happen before their eyes. They don't notice the taste of the food they eat; they eat only to appease their hunger, like animals.

'"Indra gave me arms that were one yojan long, so that I could catch and eat whatever came within range. You have cut off my hands. Now, please set fire to my shareer, and I will once more become a Gandharva. Unless You do this, I won't tell You where You will find Your Shrimatiji!"

Poorvaroopamanupraapya bhaaryaamaarga vadaami te`,

ityuktte` lakshmane`naashu shvabhramam nirmaaya tatra tam. 9. 27

Nikshipya praadahatkaashthaistato de`haatsamutthitah,

kandarpasadrishaakaarah sarvaabharanabhooshitah. 9. 28

Raamam pradakshinam kritvaa saashtaanga pranipatya cha,

kritaanjaliruvaache`dam bhakttigadgadayaa giraa. 9. 29

Lakshmanji dug a large hole in the ground and pushed Kabandh into it. He brought wood, arranged it round Kabandh, and set fire to it. A Gandharva came out of the flames.'

Kandarpasadrishaakaarah – the words *kandarpa* and *gandharva'* come together according to the Shastra of words. All the Gandharva-

vivahas given in our books were kandarpa vivahas – they were love marriages. The etymology of words says that they are sysnonyms.

Somah prathamo vivide` gandharvo vividottarah

'Kabandh's akara become the form of a Gandharva. He did Ramachandra's parikrama and placed his head at Rama's feet.

Gandharva uvaacha

Stotumutsahate` me`adya mano raamaatisambhramaat,

tvaamanantamanaadyantam manovaachaamagocharam. 9. 30

Sookshmam te` roopamavyakttam de`hadvayavilakshanam,

drigroopamitarastrvam drishyam jadamanaatmakam,

tatkatham tvaam vijaaneeyaadvyatirikttam manah prabho. 9. 31

Buddhyaatmaabhaasayoraikyam jeeva ityabhidheeyate`,

buddhyaadi saakshee brahmaiva tasminnirvishaye`akhilam. 9. 32

Aaropyate`agnaanavashaannirvikaare`akhilaatmani,

hiranyagarbhaste` sookshmam de`ham sthoolam viraat smritam. 9. 33

Bhaavanaavishayo raama sookshmam te` dhyaatrimangalam,

bhootam bhavyam bhavishyachcha yatre`dam drishyate` jagat. 9. 34

The Gandharva folded his hands and spoke to Ramachandra. His voice was husky with emotion. "Rama! My mana is eager to do Your stuti. You are anant! You are anadi!"'

Tell me, have you ever known your own adi-anadi?

People imagine they must have a beginning somewhere and will have an end somewhere. I will tell you a strange fact – no manushya has the capacity to get the anubhav of his adi or anta, because he will have existed before the point of anubhav about his adi, and he will exist

after he experiences the anta of his shareer. Our Atma is such that it has no adi and no anta. Foolish people know neither their adi nor their anta and they set out to find out about the Paramatma!

'*Ghara aaye` naaga na pooje` baambee poojana jaay'* – people don't do puja of the cobra who comes to their house; they go to do puja of the hole in which the cobra lives, when they want to do snake-worship.

Our Atma has no adi and no anta. People don't know this; they don't understand this. They shut their eyes and think about the Paramatma having no adi and no anta.

This anadi is anant. The mana and the vani think only about the things they have experienced – how can they talk about the one who illuminates their anubhav?

Prabhu's roop is different from both the sthoola and the sookshma – *drigam roopa.* It is only the *drig* – the vision – free of the differences of the drashta and the drishya. There is no difference of the gnata and the gneya in it, nor of the idam-Aham – *itaratsarvam drishyam jadamanaatmakam.* Whatever is, is all drishya, jada anatma. The drishya is jada; the Atma is 'I' – it is our Aham.

I had read the vani of Guru Sahib. It says that the world is known only in two ways – idam and Aham – 'this' and 'I'. 'This' keeps changing, and 'I' remains the same. If you look for the Paramatma in 'this' you will face great difficulties, because 'this' never remains for long. If you look for Him in 'I' you will see that 'I' always exists. The Paramatma's darshan is obtained very quickly in 'I'. In 'this', who knows how many changes there will be. So, seek Him in 'I'; you will obtain Him.

'How will this mana of mine know You? You are beyond this jada, drishya anatma.'

The oneness of the buddhi and the *aatmaa-aabhaasa* - the reflection of the Atma – is called the jeeva. The sakshi of the buddhi is the Brahman.

That, in which there is no vishay – *vishayaat nishkraanto nirvishayah tasmin nirvishaye`*- and is free of all lakshans, is not known to us, in whom this entire jagat is a superimposition, is the nirvikar Atma of all.

We sit in the deha and see the Paramatma; we don't sit in the Paramatma and see the jagat in Him. This is the cause of the basic agnan.

Hiranyagarbha is the sookshma shareer; the Virat Purush is the sthoola shareer. The vishay of bhavna is sookshma, and it is this that gives mangal to the manushya who does shyana.

Sthoole`andakoshe` de`he` te` mahadaadibhiraavrite`,

saptabhiruttaragunairvairaajo dhaaranaashrayah. 9. 35

Tvame`va sarvakaivalyam lokaaste`avayavaah smritaah,

paataalam te` paadamoolam paarshnastava mahaatalam. 9. 36

Rasaatalam te` gulfau tu talaatalamiteeryate`,

jaanunee sutalam raama uroo te` vitalam tathaa. 9. 37

Atalam cha mahee raama jaghanam naabhigam nabhah,

urahsthalam te` jyoteemshi greevaa maha uchyate`. 9. 38

Vadanam janalokaste` tapaste` shankhade`shagam,

satyaloko raghushre`shttha sheershanyaaste` sadaa prabho. 9. 39

Indraadayo lokapaalaa baahavaste` dishah shrutee,

ashvinau naasike` raama vaktram te`agnirudaahritah. 9. 40

Whatever has been in the past, whatever will be in future, whatever exists now – is all in the sthoola egg of the Universe that is the shareer of the Maheshwara Paramatma. The three worlds are the fourteen

bhuvans – cosmological regions. The prithivi is ten times their size. Jala is ten times the size of the prithivi, agni is ten times the jala, vayu is ten times the agni, and the akash is ten times the vayu. These are the seven avarans. In the kalpana and expanse of desha, the sakshi is the Atma. All fourteen bhuvans are in the Virat Purusha. There are seven lokas above and seven below.

Chakshuste` savitaa raama manashchandra udaahritah,

bhroobhanga e`va kaalaste` buddhiste` vaakpatirbhave`t. 9. 41

Rudroahankaararoopaste` vaachashchhandaansi te`avyaya,

yamaste` danshtrade`shastho nakshatraani dvijaalayah. 9. 42

Haaso mohakaree maayaa srishtiste`apaangamoksham,

dharmah puraste`adharmashcha prishthabhaaga udeeritah. 9. 43

Nimishonme`shane` raatrirdivaa chaiva raghoottama,

samudraah sapta te` kukshirnaadyo nadyastava prabho. 9. 44

Romaani vrikshaudhayo re`to vrishtistava prabho,

mahima gnaanashakttiste` e`vam sthoolam vapustava. 9. 45

Yadasmin sthoolaroope` te` manah sandhaaryate` naraih,

anaayaase`na mukttih syaadatoanyannahi kinchana. 9. 46

Atoaham raama roopam te` sthoolame`vaanubhaavaye`,

yasmindhyaate` pre`marasah saromapulako bhave`t. 9. 47

Tadaiva mukttih syaadraama yadaa te` sthoolabhaavakah,

tadapyaastaam tavaivaahame`tadroopam vichintaye`. 9. 48

The Chandrama, Surya, Indra, Rudra, Yamaraj, Dharma, and the samudra are Devtas of all. They are in the shareer of the Paramatma. If a person realizes that everything is the swarup of the Paramatma he

becomes free of raaga-dvesha. Nothing exists except the swarup of the Paramatma.

As soon as this is fully grasped, the sukha-dukha, friend-foe, bandh-Moksha, Gnan-agnan, etc will disappear. The fact is that the Paramatma's swarup has no bandhan and no Mukti. All these are the kalpana of the mana.

We see only the sthoola swarup of this jagat. Prema-rasa should fill the hriday. The shareer should tingle with bhakti and the feeling of Mukti.

It is difficult to think of all this as Bhagwan.

Then?

Do the bhavna that all this is the roop of Bhagwan holding a dhanush.

Dhanurbaanadharam shyaamam jataavalkalabhooshitam,

apeechyavayasam seetaam vichinvantam salakshmanam. 9. 49

Idame`va sadaa me syaanmaanase` raghunandana,

sarvagnah shankarah saakshaatpaarvatyaa sahitah sadaa. 9. 50

Tvadroopame`vam satatam dhyaayannaaste` raghoottama,

mumoorshoonaam tadaa kaashyaam taarakam brahmavaachakam. 9. 51

Raamaraame`tyupadishansadaa santushtamaanasah,

atastvam jaanakeenaatha paramaatmaa sunishchitah. 9. 52

Sarve` te` maayayaa moodhaastvaam na jaananti tattvatah,

namaste` raamabhadraaya ve`dhase` paramaatmane`. 9. 53

Ayodhyaadhipate` tubhyam namah saumitrise`vita,

traahi traahi jagannaatha maam maayaa naavrinotu te`. 9. 54

‘Bhagwan’s roop is blue, like the akash. He holds a dhanush-baan in His hands. He has a jata on His head and is wearing valkal garments. His form is very beautiful. Along with His brother Lakshman He is looking for Sita.

It is this roop of Rama that always stays in the mana of Shankarji. Shankarji looks at this roop of Ramachandra constantly, and it is of this roop that he gives upadesh in Kashi.

And, so, Janakinath, You are the Paramatma. Those who are stupefied by Your Maya don’t know Your Tattva.”’

People see the form; they don’t recognize the Tattva.

A lady told her son, ‘Beta, bring the gold that is kept in the safe.’ The young man went and came back empty handed after a while. ‘Mataji, there is no gold in the safe,’ he said. The mother asked, ‘what is there, if there is no gold?’

‘There are several ornaments, like bangles, necklaces and ear rings,’ he said.

‘Beta, all these ornaments are gold,’ explained his mother.

The young man did not recognize tha Tattva that was gold; he recognized the ornaments with their different names.

The names and forms were superimposed upon the Tattva that was gold. Once the young man got the Gnan about this, he could recognize that the ornaments were actually gold. It is all a play of not recognizing.

‘”He Jagannath! Protect me! Don’t let Your Maya cover up my understanding!”

Tushtoaham de`vagandharva bhaktyaa stutyaa cha te`anagha,

yaahi me` paramam sthaanam yogigamyam sanaatanam. 9. 55

Japanti ye` nityamananyabuddhyaa bhaktyaa tvadukttam stavamaagamokttam,

te`agnaanasambhootabhavam vihaaya maam yaanti nityaanubhavaanume`yam. 9. 56

Shri Ramachandra said, 'Gandharvadeva! I am pleased with your stuti and bhakti. Go to My eternal dham, which is attained by Yoga.

Whatever Shankarji tells Parvatiji is called *aagama* – a sacred text. Agam means Tantra – every letter becomes a mantra. The stuti you have done is Tantra, and therefore, you are to give up this sansara, which is created by agnan, and obtain the Paramatma who is the swarup of nitya anubhav."'

See how much beauty there is in the ugliness of this kandarpa, and how great was the ugliness of his beauty! The fact is that there are doshas in gunas and gunas in doshas. People don't realize this because of dvesha.

I did not know about this before I came to Shri Udiya Babaji in Vrindavan – I admit it freely. It was Shri Udiya Babaji Maharaj who explained this to me. We see gunas in those for whom we have prema, and doshas in those for whom we have dvesha. Neither are there hunas in anybody, nor are there doshas.

'Vasanti hi pre`mni guna na vastuni.'

When Shri Udiya Babaji Maharaj quoted this shloka written by Bharavi, I gave some serious thought to it. I had read the book 'Kiratarjuniya' several times. I had even given an examination on it. But I understood the importance of this shloka only after Udiya Babaji explained it to me.

When we have dvesha for somebody in our chitta we see dvesh in that person. It is not that the doshas are there, and then we see them. We see doshas when there is dvesha in our mana for that person. If we have prema in our mana we see gunas – it is not that the gunas are

there, and that is why we see the prema. This is the way our mana is made.

Aranya Kanda

The Tenth Sarga.

The episode of Shabari.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha.

Labdhvaa varam sa gandharvah prayaasyan raamamabraveet,

shabaryaaste` purobhaage` aashrame` raghunandana. 10. 1

Bhaktyaa tvatpaadakamale` bhakttimaargavishaaradaa,

taam prayaahi mahaabhaaga sarvam te` kathayishyati. 10. 2

Ityuktvaa prayayau soapi vimaane`naarkavarchasaa,

vishnoh padam raamanaamasmarane` falameedrisham. 10. 3

'The Gandharva said, "Look, Ramji, when You go a bit further You will meet Shabari. She lives in her Ashram. Her bhakti for Your charan-kamal is of a very elevated level. She is highly proficient on the Bhakti-Marg. Please go to her – she will tell You everything about how You can get to Sitaji."

Saying this, the Gandharva got onto the viman and went to the Vishnu-pada. This is the fruit of saying Rama-naam.

Tyaktvaa tadvipinam ghoram simhavyaaghraadidooshitam,

shanaisthaashramapadam shabaryaa raghunandanah. 10. 4

Shabaree raamamaalokya lakshmane`na samanvitam,

ayaantamaaraadgharshe`na pratyutthaayaachire`na saa. 10. 5

Patitvaa paadayoragre` harshapoornaashrulochanaa,

svaagate`naabhinandyaatha svaasane` samnyave`shayat. 10. 6

Leaving the van, Bhagwan Ramachandra went further and came to Shabari's Ashram.'

It is well known that Shabari was born in a very low caste family of hunters. It is the greatness of bhakti that she became such a great bhakta and obtained Bhagwan.

If you want to do Dharma by doing a Yagna, which Yagna will you do?

Somebody will say, 'a Vajapeyi Yagna'.

You can do a Vajapeyi Yagna only if you are a Brahmin.

If you want to do a Rajasuya Yagna, you have to be a Kshatriya. To do a Vaishyastoma Yagna you must be a Vaishya.

In Bhakti, however, there are no such stipulations. Anybody can do bhakti.

Even for Gnan there are stipulations. To get Gnan it is necessary to have internal shuddhi by the practice of the traditional steps of karma and upasana, and the external shuddhi like vivek, vairagya, etc.

Vivek-vairagya are internal. So are the steps of shama-dama etc. as well as mumuksha. You know that all these are the external sadhans of Vedanta.

This is amazing! Why are they *bahiranga* – external sadhans?

They are bahirang sadhans because the Tattva is not purified by them; they purify the antahkarana.

This is like cleaning the barrel of a gun. Cleaning the barrel doesn't mean hitting the target. The antahkarana is the barrel of the gun for the goal of achieving Tattvagnan.

In that case, what is the *antaranga* – internal – sadhan?

The antarang sadhan is shravan, manan and nididhyasana.

Shravan is to listen to spiritual discourses and grasp the purport. A sadhak has to logically affirm what he has understood in the katha. Else, he has to affirm Yoga. This is not manan.

Manan is to ponder deeply on the Gnan about the Paramatma, which has been acquired by doing shravan. It is to understand the rationale and relevance, and attain a deeper understanding of the subject.

It is not that this is a neutral logic. It does not undertaking a critical study or writing a thesis. The chintan must be fully in keeping with the shravan. Only then is it manan.

After manan comes nididhyasana. Nididhyasana is an antarang sadhan, because it is helpful in purifying the Tattva.

After that comes sakshatkara – a direct personal experience of the Tattva.

Shabari is filled with bhakti. There is no need for her to do any sadhan to get Tattvagnan. Nor does she need to be eligible for sadhans like Yagna-Yaag etc.

Every person has the adhikar – qualification or eligibility – for taking a bath in the Gangaji before sunrise, in the lunar moth of Magh, which comes round December. Even a person from the lowest caste is an adhikari for this. So is any animal and bird, including a boar. In the same way, all can bathe in the pavitra river of Bhakti.

Later on, Shabari will speak about the time when her Guruji left the Ashram, handing it over to her. He told her, 'Beti, stay here for some time. Rama will come by this path, to your Ashram. I don't need to wait to get His darshan – I see Him within and without. So I am going, but you stay here and get His darshan.'

Shabari would sweep the path clean for a great distance every morning, with the thought, 'Rama will come today.' Every night she dreamt that Rama will come the following day.

Shbaree de`khaile` sapanavaan aaja ghara raamaa aayijein naa.

This song was known to everyone when I was a child – 'Rama will come to my house today', sang Shabari, as she swept the path clean every morning.

The thought of what Rama would eat or drink never bothered Shabari. 'He will eat and drink what I offer Him,' she thought. 'He is no outsider; He is my own!'

'Shabari saw Shri Ramachandra standing there. She stood up and fell at His feet. Tears of joy ran down her face. She welcomed Him. She forgot to offer Him a pavitra asana; she gave Him her own asana to sit on. Where else would Rama get such an asana to sit on?!

Raamalakshmanayoh samyakpaadau prakshaalya bhakttitah,

tajjale`naabhishichyaangamathaarghyaadibhiraadritaa. 10. 7

Sampoojya vidhivadraamam sasaumitrim saparyayaa,

sangriheetaani divyaani raamaarttham shabaree mudaa. 10. 8

Falaanyamritakalpaani dadau raamaaya bhakttitah,

paadau sampoojya kusumaih sugandhaih saanule`panaih. 10. 9

Shabari washed the feet of Rama and Lakshman with great bhakti. She poured the water over herself. Then she offered arghya-paadya etc to them. She had painstakingly gathered the sweetest fruits from the van, which she now offered to Ramachandra and Lakshman. She did puja of Bhagwan's charan-kamal with fragrant flowers.

Kritaatithyam raghushre`shthamupavishtham sahaanujam,

shabaree bhakttisampannaa praanjalirvaakyamabraveet. 10. 10

Atraashrame` raghushre`shtha guravo me` maharshayah,

sthitaah shushrooshanam te`shaam kurvatee samupasthitaa. 10. 11

Bahuvarshasahasraani gataaste` brahmanah padam,

gamishyantoabruvanmaam tvam vasaatraiva samaahitaa. 10. 12

Raamo daasharathirjaatah paramaatmaa sanaatanah,

raakshasaanaam vadhaarthaaya risheenaam rakshanaaya cha. 10. 13

Aagamishyati saikaagradhyaananishthaa sthiraa bhava,

idaaneem chitrakootaadraavaashrame` vasati prabhuh. 10. 14

Yaavadaagamanam tasya taavadraksha kale`varam,

drishtvaiva raaghavam dagdhvaa de`ham yaasyasi tatpadam. 10. 15

The episode of Shabari offering Ramachandra *joothaa* fruits – meaning, fruits into which she had bitten to check whether they were sweet enough to offer Rama – is not given here.

However, I will tell you about one Mahatma. In his discourses he would stress on certain habits of maintaining purity in our lifestyle. He would emphasise that we should never eat anything that is jootha. Once, in the middle of the katha one brash young man stood up and asked him, 'should we have to jootha of our wife or not?'

You would have understood what he meant!

'Streemukham tu sadaa shuchih' – it is written in the Brihaspati Smriti that the mouth of the patni is always pavitra. The people of the sansara don't understand the subtleties.

'Shabari folded her hands and said, "Prabhu! My Guruji lived at this Ashram earlier. I did his seva for several years. When leaving the Ashram he told me, 'you stay here now. The Paramatma has manifested as Ramachandra, to kill the Rakshasas and protect the Rishis. He will come here, by this path. Stay here till then, doing dhyana. Have nishtha.'"'

Shabari did not sit in a Samadhi. Her mana was constantly focused on Rama. Her sweeping the path and floor of the Ashram we no less meaningful than a Samadhi, because she did it with the thought that Rama's feet would step on this ground. Her daily plucking of fruits and

flowers for Him was the same. Nothing she did was for herself; everything she did was for Rama.

The pavitrata of purpose lies in the pavitrata of the sadhan.

What is the purpose of the work you do?

If the purpose – the *udde`shya* – of what you do is pavitra, the work becomes pavitra, whatever the work may be. This is the principle of Bhakti.

Kasmai de`vaaya – for whom do you work? What is the purpose of your activity? Is it to get Atmagnan, for antahkarana shuddhi, to serve the Paramatma, or to get bhakti?

Do some work, at least! Make some effort. What will you achieve if you remain idle?

Andhe`naiva neeyamaanaa yathaandhaa. The Upanishad has given a sharp rebuke – one blind man following another blind man! Neither has wisdom or understanding!

'Shabari said, "my Guruji told me that Rama has come up to Chitrakoot. He will walk up to here. However, he said he had to go now. That means, for the Mahatmas who are paripoorna, Bhagwan is everywhere. Therefore, my waiting for You is fulfilled today, and my doing dhyana is fulfilled – *safalam gurubhaashitam.* I was anxious to have my Guru's words shown to be true. Now what is said is proved to be correct. I waited for You to have my Guru's words proved true."'

Tathaivaakaravam raama tvaddhyaanaikaparaayanaa,

prateekshyaagamanam te`adya safalam gurubhaashitam. 10. 16

Tava sandarshanam raama gurunaamapi me` na hi,

yoshinmoodhaaprame`yaatman heenajaatisamudbhavaa. 10. 17

Tava daasasya daasaanaam shatashankhyottarasya cha,

daaseetve` naadhikaaroasti kutah sakshaattavaiva hi. 10. 18

Katham raamaadya me` drishtastvam manovaagagocharah,

stotum na jaane` de`ve`sha kim karomi praseeda me`. 10. 19

‘”Even Guruji didn’t get Your darshan. I am just a stupid woman born in a low caste. If Your dasas were to be counted – the dasa of Your dasa, his dasa, and so on, I am not fit to be the dasi of the hundredth dasa. Then, how can I be qualified to do Your seva?”’

See Shabari’s humility!

‘”Then how is it that I have got Your dharshan?” asked Shabari. “I don’t even know how to do Your stuti!”

Punstave` streetve` vishe`sho vaa jaatinaamaashramaadayah,

na kaaranam madbhajane` bhakttire`va hi kaaranam. 10. 20

Yagnadaanatapobhirvaa ve`daadhyayanakarmabhih,

naiva drashtumaham shakyo madbhakttivimukhaih sadaa. 10. 21

Shri Rama told Shabari, “the gender makes no difference to Me. It is immaterial whether My bhakta is a stree or a purush.”’

People are inclined to tell women, ‘a stree doesn’t have the adhikar to do this’, but Bhagwan said that He is not even aware of the gender of His bhakta.

Then?

‘Bhagwan said, “the gender has no meaning for Me. It makes no difference whether the person is a stree or a purush. I don’t understand any caste, Ashram, or name – only prema is needed for doing My bhajan. Caste, reputation, Ashram, stree-purush, etc are of no consequence. My darshan cannot be obtained by doing any Yagna, daan, tapasya, study of the Vedas, karma, etc. A person who does not have bhakti for Me can never get My darshan. And so, Shabari, I will tell you the sadhan for My bhakti in brief.”’

I had heard, earlier, that Ramji told Shabari, 'what are you saying, Shabari?'

Shabari had said:

Adham ate` adhama adhama puninaaree,

tinha manha mein matimanda ganvaaree.

(I am the lowliest of the lowly and then I am a stree, stupid and rustic.)

'"What are you saying?" asked Ramji. "Oh! There is nobody as superior as you, Shabari! Come; I will give you upadesh."'

That means, Shabari described her lowly level and inadequacy for bhakti.

There are people who display great pride about their high status. 'What do you think?' they say, 'my Guru is so great! My Bhagwan is so wonderful!'

Nija prabhuke` bala trina saba kaahoo – everybody is as a blade of grass beside the greatness of my Prabhu!

Shabari is different!

'Ramachandra said, "listen carefully to what I tell you."'

Tasmaadbhaaminee sankshe`paadvakshye`aham bhakttisaadhanam,

sataam sangatire`vaatra saadhanam prathamam smritam. 10. 22

Dviteeyam matkathaalaapastriteeyam madgune`ranam,

vyaakhyaatritvam madvachasaam chturtham saadhanam bhave`t. 10. 23

Aachaaryopaasanam bhadre` madbuddhyaamaayayaa sadaa,

panchamam punyasheelatvam yamaadi niyamaadi cha. 10. 24

Nishthaa matpoojane` nityam shashtham saadhanameeritam,

mama mantropaasakatvam saangam saptamamuchyate`. 10. 25

Tulsidasji has also used the word 'bhamini' in this episode. Like the word 'sundari', this is also a term of endearment.

'Shri Ramachandra said, "the first sadhan is to have the sang of Sants."'

The sang of Sants means, a lamp that is lit. If you wish to light a lamp you need a lamp that is burning, so you can touch the wick of the unlit lamp to the flame to light it. Thus, Satsang – the sang of Sants – is the first sadhan.

'"The second sadhan is to do shravan of Bhagwan's katha. The third sadhan is to describe Bhagwan's gunas, and the fourth sadhan is to talk about His gunas to other people. To do the Guru's upasana, believing him to be Bhagwan's swarup, is the fifth sadhan. Never practice deceit with your Guru."'

In Mumbai I noticed that the people who want to sit right in front bring a garland which they place on the book under discussion, and then sit down right in front. In this, the garland becomes Maya; it is a means to achieve what they want.

People who do Bhagwan's bhajan with a hope of getting some the object of their desire – perhaps a parcel of clothes, or a money order, or some such benefit – actually want Bhagwan to do their seva. They pretend to be His bhaktas, Bhagwan understands that it is His Maya that is in their mana.

Maya in Bhagwan's seva may be tolerated, but Maya in rhe seva of the Guru will achieve nothing.

'"Do upasana of the Acharya – *mad buddhyaamaayayaa sadaa (24)* – with the bhava that you are serving Bhagwan. Don't desire anything but prema for the Paramatma. You should feel a deep contentment, as though you have got the Paramatma Himself.

The fifth point is that you should be punyasheel – inclined to do punya – and observe the rules of yama-niyam etc. To have nishtha for

Bhagwan's puja is the sixth point, and doing japa of Bhagwan's name is the seventh point.

Madbhaktte`shvadhikaa poojaa sarvabhoote`shu manmatih,

baahyaarthe`shu viraagitvam shamaadisahitam tathaa. 10. 26

Ashtamam navamam tattvavichaaro mama bhaamini,

e`vam navavidhaa bhakttih saadhanam yasya kasya vaa. 10. 27

Striyo vaa purushasyaapi tiryagyonigatasya vaa,

bhakttih sanjaayate` pre`malakshanaa shubhalakshane`. 10. 28

Bhakttau sanjaatamaatraayaam mattattvaanubhavastadaa,

mammanubhavasiddhyasya mukttistatraiva janmani. 10. 29

Syaattasmaatkaaranam bhakttirmokshasye`ti sunishchitam,

prathamam saadhanam yasya bhave`ttasya krame`na tu. 10. 30

The eighth point is to see Bhagwan in all, and do His puja in His bhaktas. There should be vairagya for external matters, and the sadhan should be for Samadhi.

The ninth point is to do Tattva-vichar. Tattva-vichar does not mean thinking about a manushya's face and features, karmas, bhoga etc. 'What bhoga will I get? What karma should I do?' These are not the Tattva. Manushyas generally apply all their buddhi to doing vichar about the work they should do and bhoga they should get, or on worldly matters."'

What is Tattva-vichar?

'Saa cha saa cha tancha taani' – this Ishwara, that jeeva and that jagat are called *taani*.

'Te`shaam bhaavah tattvam' – the akhand Tattva in the jeeva , Ishwara and jagat is called the Tattva.

'Anaaropitaakaaram' – in which there is no form of jeeva, jagat or Ishwara which is superimposed on the Tattva is called *'adhyaaropa vinirmuktta'.*

What secret points am I to tell you about this? It is not proper to reveal them publicly.

For example, do you wish to know the Tattva of gold? I will tell you.

What is gold? Are the ear rings, bangles, necklaces etc gold? No; the shapes and designs of different ornaments have been superimposed on gold.

Is a gold ingot gold?

If you truly wish to know the Tattva that is gold you wil find that it is not separate from the Atma. Actually, the svarna-Tattva is the Atma-Tattva. When a form is superimposed on it, it will appear in the form of mithya Maya.

People pick up books at their fancy and read them, but they don't ponder over the substance, nor do they understand the purport. They don't have any anubhav. They talk about it as though they were very learned.

There is nothing in this world that can be established as a Tattva that is separate from the Atma – neither the desha, kaala, vastu, dravya, nor the level. I have now told you something that is secret. These are things known to the Gurus and explained by the Gurus.

What is the Tattva, actually?

'"To do vichar on this is the ninth bhakti. These are the *navadhaa bhakti* – nine kinds of Bhakti – that are established."'

You may have heard people say that women and Shudras should not study the Vedas and the Upanishads. A great deal of vichar and Shastrartha has been done on this. I will tell you what the opinion of the most orthodox vidvans is.

The highest Pundits say that all can get Tattvagnan. There is no bar for this. A stree, Shudra, Antyaj, even an animal and bird can get Tattvagnan. Nobody can be disqualified as being ineligible.

However, there is a difference of opinion about whether Gnan should be obtained through the mantras of the Vedas and Upanishads , or through books like the 'Vichar Sagar'; else, even birds and animals can get Tattvagnan. When the vakta of the Mandukya Upanishad is a manduka – a frog – how can anybody say who can get Gnan and who can't?

The fact is, it is not a matter of stealing the meaning; it is a question of the eligibility of the language.

Thus, Tattva-vichar is the ninth bhakti. All are eligible for getting the prema-lakshana bhakti, in which prema is the predominant factor. When bhakti arises, the Bhagwat-Tattva arises. Once a person gets anubhav he gets Mukti.

Mukti is not obtains after death, in another janma; it is obtained in this very lifetime. Therefore, bhakti is a definite karana of Moksha.

If the first sadhan is maintained, the other sadhans will also be maintained.

Bhave`tsarva tato bhakttirmukttire`va sunishchitam,

yasmaanmadbhakttiyukttaa tvam tatoaham tvaamupasthitah. 10. 31

Ito maddarshanaamukttistava naastava naastyatra sanshayah,

yadi jaanaasi me` broohi seetaa kamalalochanaa. 10. 32

Kutraaste` ke`na vaa neetaa priyaa me` priyadarshanaa. 10. 33

'Bhagwan Rama said, "Shabari, you have My bhakti. That is why I have come to give you darshan. My darshan will give you Mukti. There is no doubt about this.

Now tell Me, where is Sita? Who has abducted her? Kabandh sent Me to you."

Shabaryuvaacha

De`va jaanaasi sarvagna sarvam tvam vishvabhaavana,

tathaapi prichchhase` yanmaam lokaananusritah Prabho. 10. 34

Tatoahamabhidhaasyaami seetaa yatraadhunaa sthitaa,

raavane`na hrataa seetaa lankaayaam vartate`adhunaa. 10. 35

Itah sameepe` raamaaste` pampaanaama sarovaram,

rishyamookagirirnaama tatsameepe` mahaanagah. 10. 36

Chaturbhirmantribhih saardhyam sugreevo vaanarasaadhipah,

bheetabheetah sadaa yatra tishthatyatulavikramah. 10. 37

Baalinashcha bhayaad bhraatustadagamyamrishe`rbhayaat,

baalinastatra gachchha tvam te`na sakhyam kuru Prabho. 10. 38

Sugreeve`na sa sarvam te` kaaryam sampaadayishyati,

ahamagnim prave`kshyaami tavaagre` raghunandana. 10. 39

Muhoortam tishtha raaje`ndra yaavaddagdhvaa kale`varam,

yaasyaami bhagavan raama tava vishnoh param padam. 10. 40

Shabari said, "Dev! You are sarvagna. You know everything! You are the founder of this vishwa! In spite of that, You ask me, so I will tell You what I know. Ravana, the Raja of Lanka, has abducted Sita. She is in Lanka.

I will tell You the method for getting her hack. There is a lake nearby, called the Pampa Sarovar. Beside the lake is a mountain called the Rishyamuk Parvat. Sugriva stays on a small peak of this giri, with his four mantris, who are his loyal advisors. Sugriva has great strength, but he is terrified of his elder brother Bali.

Bali cannot come to the Rishyamuk Parvat to kill Sugriva, which is why he lives there. Please go there and establish a friendship with Sugriva. He will do the needful for You."'

If a manushya is unable to accomplish his goal by himself he should take the help of a competent supporter. If an enemy is too powerful to conquer, a manushya should make a treaty with him. Power should be bound.

Even in the Shastra of Political policy everything should be done with wisdom and prudence. When we have to interact with people, we need people who will support us.

'Shabari said, "I will go into the agni now. You please stay here for a little longer. I will go to the Param-pada of Vaikuntha."

Iti raamam samaamantrya pravive`sha hutaashanam,

kshanaatrirdhooya sakalamavidyaakritabandhanam,

raamaprasaadaachchhabaree moksham praapaatidurlabham. 10. 41

Kim durlabham jagannaathe` shreeraame` bhakttavatsale`,

prasanne`adhamajanmaapi shabaree mukttimaapa saa. 10. 42

Kim punarbraahmanaa mukhyaah punyaah shreeraamachintakaah,

mukttim yaanteeti tadbhakttirmukttire`van a sanshayah. 10. 43

Bhakttirmukttividhaayinee bhagavatah shreeraamachandrasya he` lokaah kaamadudhaanghripadmayugalam se`vadhvamatyutsukhaah,

naanaagnaanavishe`shamantravitatim tyaktvaa sudoore` mrisham raamam shyaamatanum smaraarihridaye` bhaantam bhajadhvam budhaah. 10. 44

'When a manushya comes into the *gnaanaagni* – the fire of Gnan – the bandhan that never existed is not burnt, because there was no bandhan to start with! The person gets the Gnan that no bandhan ever

existed. “I was deluded into believing myself to be bound,” he thinks. “All that is nothing but ashes now.”

In the same way, by Rama’s kripa, Shabari got Moksha. Bhagwan Ramachandra is bhakta-vatsal – His love for His bhaktas is like a mother’s love. Even a low-caste, rustic woman like Shabari got Mukti, because Bhagwan Rama was pleased with her bhakti. Then, if a person is a Brahmin who does chintan of Rama, what cause can there be to doubt that he will get Mukti?

Bhakti for Shri Ramachandra gives Mukti. His charan-kamal are the Kalpa vriksha. Do His seva eagerly. The things written in books about mantras, japa, etc are difficult for ordinary people to grasp. They often get confused and do the wrong things. So, let go of all that, and do the seva of shyam-sundar Shri Ramachandra, who is established in the hriday of Bhagwan Shankar, and shines brightly in his hriday.

Samaaptamidamaranyakaandam.

Kishkindha Kanda

The first Sarga

Friendship with Sugriva

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Tatah salakshmano raamah shanaih pampaasarastatam,
aagatya sarasaam shre`shtham drishtvaa vismayamaayayau. 1. 1
Kroshamaatram suvisteernamagaadhaamalashambaram,
utfullaambujakavhaarakumudotpalamanditam. 1. 2
Hansakaarandavaakeernam chakravaakaadishobhitam,
jalakukkutakoyashtikraunchanaadopanaaditam. 1. 3
Naanaapushpalataakeernam naanaafalasamaavritam,
sataam manahsvachchhajalam padmakinjalkavaasitam. 1. 4
Tatropasprishya salilam peetvaa shramaharam vibhuh,
saanujah sarasasteere` sheetale`na pathaa yayau. 1. 5
Rishyamookagire`h paarshve` gachchhantau raamalakshmanau,
dhanurbaanakarau daantau jataavalkalamanditau,
pashyantau vividhaanvrikshaan gire`h shobhaam suvikramau. 1. 6
Sugreevastu gire`rmoodhni chaturbhih saha vaanaraih,
sthitvaa dadarsha tau yaantaavaaruroha gire`h shirah. 1. 7
Bhayaadaaha hanoomantam kau tau veeravarau sakhe`,
gachchha jaaneehi bhadram te` baturbhootvaa dvajaakritih. 1. 8
Vaalinaa pre`shitau kimvaa maam hantum samupaagatau,
taabhyaam sambhaashanam kritvaa jaaneehi hridayam tayoh. 1. 9
Yadi tau dushtahridayau sangnaam kuru karaagratah,

vinayaavanato bhootvaa e`vam jaaneehi nishchyam. 1. 10

'Shri Rama and Lakshman proceeded towards the Pampa Sarovar. They were amazed to see the beauty of the lake. It was two miles long and very wide. Lotuses and water lilies of all kinds bloomed in it. There were varieties of ambuj, kalhar, kumud, utpal, etc. Swans, geese, ducks, water fowl, and other birds like chaya and chakva, koyashti, kraunch etc swam in the sarovar or stood on the shore, where there were fruit trees and flowering shrubs and all kinds of creepers growing in profusion. The water was as limpid as the mana of a Sant. It was fragrant with the scent of the pollen of the flowers that bloomed in the lake.

Rama and Lakshman washed their hands and feet and drank deeply of the cool water. They felt completely refreshed. Then they began to walk towards the Rishyamuk Parvat, with their dhanush-baan in their hands. They were enthralled by the beauty of the scenery round them.

Sugruva was sitting on a rocky outcrop, on the Rishyamuk Parvat with his four mantris. He saw Rama and Lakshman coming in their direction. He climbed a little higher to get a better view. Then he called out to Hanuman, "who are these two valorous men, my friend? Please go and find out who they are and why they are coming here. Go as a young Brahmachari. I suspect that Bali has sent them to kill me. Talk to them and find out their purpose. If their intention is to kill me, signal to me with your hand."

Tathe`ti baturoope`na hanuman samupaagatah,

vinayaavanato bhootvaa raamam natve`damabraveet. 1. 11

Kau yuvaam purushavyaaghrau yuvaanau veerasammatau,

dyotayantau dishah saraah prabhayaa bhaaskaraaviva. 1. 12

Yuvaam trailokyakartaaraaviti bhaati mano mama,

yuvaam pradhaanapurushau jagaddhe`tu jaganmayau. 1. 13

Maayayaa maanushaakaarau charantaaviva leelayaa,

bhoobhaaraharanaarthaaya bhakttaanaam paalanaaya cha. 1. 14

Avateernaaviha parau charantau kshatriyakritee,

jagatsthitilayo sargam leelayaa kartumudyatau. 1. 15

'Baturoope`na hanumaan' – Hanumanji assumed the roop of a Brahmin boy and went to Rama and Lakshman.

"Maharaj", he said, "who are You? Your shareer has effulgence. Are You the sakshat Paramatma who created this srishti? That is the thought that comes to my mana when I see You. Are You both the Pradhan Purusha? Is it You who are the abhinna-nimitta-upadan karana of this world who has assumed the form of this jagat? Have You come to remove the burden of this prithivi, as though playing a game? Have You come to protect Your bhaktas? You have manifested as Kshatriyas; do You wish to again make this srishti, sthiti and pralay? You are independent. You are the ones who motivate, sitting in the hriday of all beings. Or perhaps, You are the sakshat Nara-Narayana, come to walk around in this world?"'

Look; the root of all Ramayanas is the Valmiki Ramayana. This – the Adhyatma Ramayana – has been written in order to give the upadesh of adhyatma. If these Ramayanas are read seriously you will understand the colossal amount of matter that was available for Tulsidasji when he wrote the Ramcharitamanas.

Nara-naaraayana ki tum dou – are You two Nara and Narayana?

Svatrantrau pre`rakau sarvahridayasthaavihe`shvarau,

naranaaraayanau loke` charantaaviti me` matih. 1. 16

Shreeraamo lakshmanam praaha pashyaina baturoopinam,

shabdashaastramashe`she`na shrutam noonamane`kadhaa. 1. 17

Ane`na bhaashitam kritsnam na kinchidapashabditam,

tatah praaha hanoomantam raaghavo gnaanavigraha. 1. 18

Aham daashrathee raamastvayam me` lakshmanoanujah,

seetayaa bhaaryayaa saardham piturvachanagauravaat. 1. 19

Aagatastatra vipine` sthitoaham dandake` dvija,

tatra bhaaryaa hritaa seetaa rakshasaa ke`nachinmama,

taamanve`shtuumihaayaatau ko vaa kasya vaa vada. 1. 20

'Rama told Lakshman, "look at this young Brahmachari – he has had a thorough teaching of the Shabda-Shastra. He has heard it not once, but several times, and he knows all the eight vyakarans. He made such a long speech without a single mistake!"

After praising Hanumanji to Lakshmanji, Bhagwan Ramachandra told Hanuman, "I am Rama, son of Dashrath, and this is Lakshman, My younger brother. We had come to the Dandak van with My patni, Sita. Some Rakshasa abducted her. We are going around searching for her. Tell Me, who are you and who do you belong to?"

Baturuvaacha

Sugreevo naama raajaa yo vaanaraanaam mahaamatih,

chaturbhirmantribhih saarghyam girimoordhani nishthati. 1. 21

Bhraataa kaneeyaan sugreevo vaalinah paapache`tasah,

te`na nishkaasito bhaaryaa hritaa tasye`ha vaalinaa. 1. 22

Tadbhayaadrishyamookaakhyam girimaashritya samsthitah,

aham sugreevasachivo vaayuputro mahaamate`. 1. 23

Hanoomaannaama vikhyaato hyanjaneegarbhasambhavah,

te`na sakhyam tvayaa yukttam sugreeve`na raghoottama. 1. 24

Bhaaryaapahaarinam hantum sahaayaste` bhavishyati,

idaaneeme`va gachchhaama aagachchha yadi rochate`. 1. 25

Hanumanji replied, “my Raja is Sugriva. He is clever and wise. He stays on a peak of this parvat with four mantris. He is Bali’s younger brother. Bali is a great paapi. He drove Sugriva out of the house and stole his patni. Sugriva stays here out of fear of Bali.

I am Sugriva’s mantri, Hanuman, the son of Vayu Devta. I was born from the womb of Anjani. I advise You to form a friendship with Sugriva. Both of you have had your patnis taken away by force. Sugrive will help You to kill the Rakshasa who has abducted Your patni, because he has experienced the same suffering and understands Your pain.”’

Baanjha ki jaane` prasava kai peera’ – how can a barren woman know the pain of childbirth?

‘“A person who has not experienced this tragedy can never know the anguish of a manushya whose patni has been taken from him by force,” said Hanumanji. “If my suggestion appeals to You, let us go to Sugriva at once.”

Shreeraama uvaacha

Ahamapyaagataste`na sakhyam kartum kapeeshvara,

sakhyustsyaapi yatkaaryam tatkarishyaamyasamshayam. 1. 26

Hanoomaan svasvaroope`na sthito raamamathaabraveet,

aarohataam mama skandhau gachchhamah parvatopari. 1. 27

Yatra tishthati sugreevo mantribhirvaalino bhayaat,

tathe`ti tasyaaruroha skandham raamoatha lakshmanah. 1. 28

Utpapaata gire`rmoodhni kshanaade`va mahaakapih,

vrikshachchhaayaam samaashritya sthitau tau raamalakshmanau. 1. 29

Ramachandra said, “O prince of Kapis, I have come here with the purpose of establishing a friendship with Sugriva. It is not that only he

will help Me in killing the Rakshasa who stole My patni; I will also kill the person who stole his patni. I will help him and he will help Me. This is a matter of friendship."

Hanumanji gave up his Brahmachari roop.'

'Prabhu pahichaani pare`u gahi charanaa' – Tulsidasji has written that Shankar Bhagwan told Parvatiji that Hanumanji recognized Prabhu and caught His feet. The sukha he felt is beyond description.

'Then Hanumanji took Ramachandra and Lakshman on his shoulders.'

The two brothers had not used any vehicle or mount since the day they got off Sumantra's chariot in Shringaverpur. Hanumanji is a great warrior – it is no problem for him to carry Rama and Lakshman on his shoulders.

Regarding Hanumanji, some people are of the opinion that he is vairagya-roop. Goswamiji has written that Hanumanji is the form of srong vairagya.

In the opinion of the Ramanujacharya, Hanumanji is strong vivek, and he is Acharya-roop. To make Sitaji meet Ramji, he first gives *drishti-paata* – meaning, transferring spiritual power through a look – and then arranges for them to meet.

So then, is Hanumanji vivek-roop or is he vairagya-roop?

Look; there is no difference between vivek and vairagya. A manushya who has vivek also has vairagya for the different objects. He knows what he should have vairagya for. Vivek and vairagya are one and the same; and, this vivek-vairagya has the power to take Bhagwan wherever they want Him to go. Vivek and vairagya are the vehicles of Bhagwan – they are His *vaahana*.

Hanumanji carried Rama and Lakshman to the top of the Rishyamuk Parvat. It is not that he walked up; he took one great leap and reached

the summit. When somebody takes Ramji on his shoulders, what need has he to go slowly?

Hanumanji settled Rama and Lakshman comfortably in the shade of a large tree and went to Sugriva.

There is one point to note here. Who is to be given greater importance – Sugriva or Ramachandra Bhagwan?

Hanoomaanapi sugreevamupagamya kritaanjalih,

vye`tum te` bhayamaayaatau raajan shreeraamalakshmanau. 1. 30

Shreeghramukttishtha raame`na sakhyam te` yojitam mayaa,

agnim saakshinamaaropya te`na sakhyam drutam kuru. 1. 31

Tatoatiharshaatsugreevah samaagamya raghoottamam,

vrikshashaakhaam svayam chhittvaa vishtaraaya dadau mudaa. 1. 32

Hanoomaanalakshmanaayadaatsugreevaaya cha lakshmanah,

harshe`na mahataavishtaah sarva e`vaavatasthire`. 1. 33

Lakshmanastvabraveetsarvam raamavrittaanatamaaditah,

vanavaasaabhigamanam seetaaharanamaiva cha. 1. 34

'Hanumanji went to Sugriva and said, "have no fear. Shri Rama-Lakshman have come. Come and establish a friendship with them, keeping Agni as the sakshi."

Sugriva came at once to the place where Ramaji was sitting with Lakshmanji.'

People sometimes forget the proper protocol. Had Hanumanji carried Rama and Lakshman straight to Sugriva, it would have meant that Hanumanji considered Sugriva to be greater than Rama and Lakshman. By placing Ramji in a pleasant place and bringing Sugriva to Him, he made it clear that Ramji was greater.

‘Sugriva broke off a thick branch of a tree and offered it to Ramachandra as an asana. This is also in keeping with the protocol. Sugriva did not offer a branch to Lakshman; he gave a branch to Hanumanji, and Hanumanji offered it to Lakshmanji. Then Lakshmanji cut off a branch and offered it to Sugrivaji. Lakshman is Sugriva’s junior in status.

Thus, one Raja gave an asana to another Raja, a mantri gave an asana to Lakshmanji, and Lakshmanji gave one to Sugrivaji. This is what is described here.

Lakshman started the conversation. Rama did not open the conversation.’

If an ordinary person describes Rama’s charitra he will miss this point. Ramachandra is very compassionate. Very often He starts talking to people to put them at their ease. That is a separate matter. Here, it is a matter of the protocol between two Rajas, and so, Lakshmanji started the conversation with Sugriva. He narrated the whole story about the vanavas and the abduction of Sitaji.

Lakshmanokttam vachah shrutvaa sugreevo raamamabraveet,

aham karishye` raaje`ndra seetaayaah parimaarganam. 1. 35

Saahaayyamapi te` raama karishye` shatrughaatinah,

shrunu raama mayaadrishtam kinchitte` kathayaamyaham. 1. 36

E`kadaa mantribhih saardham sthitoaham girimoordhani,

vihaayasaa neeyamaanaam ke`nachitpramadottamaam. 1. 37

Kroshayanteem raama raame`ti drishtvaasmaanparvatopari,

aamuchyaabharanaanyaashu svottareeye`na bhaaminee. 1. 38

Nireekshyaadhah parityajya kroshantee te`na rakshasaa,

neetaaham bhooshanaanyaashu guhaayaamakshipam prabho. 1. 39

Idaaneemapi pashya tvam jaaneehi tava vaa na vaa,

ityuktvaaneeya raamaaya darshayaamaasa vaanarah. 1. 40

Vimuchya raamastaddrishtvaa haa seete`ti muhurmuhuh,

hridi nikshipya tatsarvam ruroda praakrito yathaa. 1. 41

Aashvaasya raaghvam bhraataa lakshmano vaakyamabraveet,

achire`naiva te` raama praapyate` jaanakee shubha,

vaanare`ndrasahaaye`na hatvaa raavanamaahave`. 1. 42

Sugreevoapyaaha he` raama pratignaam karavaani te`,

samare` raavanam hatvaa tava daasyaami jaanakeem. 1. 43

"I will find out where Sita is," vowed Sugriva. "I will also help in killing the person who carried her off."

Then Sugriva told them how he and his mantris saw Sitaji flying over their heads in a chariot, calling out Rama's name, as they sat on the Rishyamuk Parvat one day. He told Rama about the bundle of ornaments Sitaji threw down to them as the chariot flew overhead. He showed the bundle to Rama. Bhagwan Ramachandra saw the ornaments and began to lament like an ordinary man who is pining for his patni. Lakshman and Sugriva reminded Him about the work they lay ahead, of killing Ravana and rescuing Sitaji.'

Tato hanoomaanprajvalya tayoragnim sameepatah,

taavubhau raamasugreevaavagnau saakshini tishthati. 1. 44

Baahu prasaarya chaalingya parasparamakalmashau,

sameepe` raghunaathasya sugreevah samupaavishat. 1. 45

Just see Ramachandra's compassion! He makes Agni the sakshi to seal His friendship with Sugriva! What need had He, to establish friendship with Sugriva, keeping Agni Devta as the sakshi? This is His prema; it is His karuna!

'Ramachandra spread out both arms and embraced Sugriva. He made Sugriva sit beside Him to bolster his confidence in the help the newly-made friendship would bring him.'

A person must have help if he is to fight a powerful enemy. Sugriva and Rama needed each other's support. It is impossible to conquer a powerful enemy without help. Now, Sugriva and Ramji had become sakhas – their friendship was firmly established.

One meaning of *sakhaa* – friend – is when two friends have their meals together. Sugriva would also have his meals with Ramachandra – *saha khaadati iti sakha.*

When the name of one is taken, the name of the other also comes up. For example, Rama-Sugriva, Shri Krishna-Arjuna, Shri Krishna-Uddhava – because they are known to be close friends.

Svodantam kathayaamaasa pranayaadradhunaayake`,

sakhe` shrunu mamodantam vaalinaa yatkritam puraa. 1. 46

Mayaputroatha maayaavee namnaa paramadurmadah,

kishkindhaam samupaagatya vaalinam samupaahvayat. 1. 47

Singhanaade`na mahataa vaalee tu tadamarshanah,

niryayau krodhataamraaksho jaghaana dridhamushtinaa. 1. 48

Dudraava te`na samvigno jagaama svaguhaam prati,

anududraava tam vaalee maayaavinamaham tathaa. 1. 49

Tatah pravishtamaalokya guhaam maayaavinam rushaa,

vaalee maamaaha tishtha tvam bahirgachchhaamyaham guhaam,

ityuktvaavishya sa guhaam maasame`kam na niryayau. 1. 50

Maasaadoordhvam guhaadvaaraannirgatam rudhiram bahu,

taddrishtvaa paritaptaango mrito vaaleeti dukhitah. 1. 51

‘Sugrivaji said, “Sakha, now I will tell you my story, about how Bali behaved with me. Mayavi, the son of Mayasura, was very brash. He came to Kishkindha and challenged Bali. Bali could not endure this. He rushed out, his eyes reddened with anger, to beat Mayavi.

Mayavi ran and went into his cave. Bali went after him, but before going he told me, ‘you stay here. I will kill him and come back. Several days passed. I waited anxiously. Then a stream of blood came out from the entrance of the cave. I felt certain that Bali had been killed.”’

This tendency to ‘feel certain’ about something not based on fact, leads to much trouble. It is neither anvay nor vyatirek – meaning, there is no connection to anything and no distinction that indicates a difference. There is no hetu-grah and no vyapti-grah – meaning, no cause and no perversion. There is nothing on which an assumption can be based.

People say, ‘I understood it instinctively’. There are people who understand the Ishwara instinctively. They become confused. How can anybody be sure that what they guess about what is in the mind of another is accurate?

‘Sugriva assumed that Bali had been killed, and placed a huge rock at the opening of the cave.’

Once, some people had assumed something about me, which made me very sad. I had gone to Balia for a katha. Swami Prabodhanandaji was with me. I was also eager to meet a friend of mine who lived there. When I went to his house I was told that he is at a Conference. I had not been invited to the Conference, but I went, anyway. Once there, I was caught and made to give a discourse.

Having gone uninvited the previous day I did not go to the conference the following day. The result was that some of the organisers of the Conference assumed that I had gone there only to spoil the success of their Conference. Their presumption was based on the fact that some hundred or two hundred people came to listen to my katha instead of

going to their Conference. When I heard that these people are angry and upset with me, I went to the conference again, again uninvited!

When things are assumed without ascertaining the facts, it causes great trouble. An inference or presumption is based on a connection with a past experience. If one has heard about something that he experiences, his assumption can be accepted as valid.

Guhaadvaari shilaame`kaam vidhaaya grihamaagatah,

tatoabravam mrito vaalee guhaayaam rakshasaa hatah. 1. 52

Tachchhrutvaa dukhitaah sarve` maamanichchhantamapyuta,

raajye`abhishe`chanam chakruh sarve` vaanaramantrinah. 1. 53

Shishtam tadaa mayaa raajyam kinchitkaalamarindama,

tatah samaagato vaalee mamaaha parusham rushaa. 1. 54

Bahudhaa bhartsayitvaa maam nijaghaana cha mushtibhih,

tato nirgatya nagaraadadhaavam parayaa bhiyaa. 1. 55

Lokaan sarvaanparikramya rishyamookam samaashritah,

rishe` shaapabhayaatsoapi naayaateemam girim prabho. 1. 56

Tadaadi mama bhaaryaam sa svayam bhunktte` vimoodhadheeh,

ato dukhe`na santapto hritadaaro hritaashrayah. 1. 57

Vasaamyadya bhavatpaadasamsparshaatsukhitoasmyaham,

mitradukhe`na santapto raamo raaajeevalochanah. 1. 58

Hanishyaami tava dve`shyam sheeghram bhaaryaapahaarinam,

iti pratignaamakarotsugreevasya purastadaa. 1. 59

‘Sugriva fell into the folly of presumption, and came back to Kishkindha. He told the people that Bali had been killed. Then his Rajya-abhishek was done and he settled to rule with his patni.

Bali came back to Kishkindha after killing Mayavi. He saw that Sugriva had become the Raja and battered him with his fists, asking angrily, 'couldn't you find any other place on which to sit that you took my throne?'

"Now I stay here, on the Rishyamuk Parvat because of Matang Rishi's shaap to Bali, that he will die if he comes here," said Sugriva. "I am very dukhi. I got sukha by the touch of your charanaravinda. I am your mitra."

The dukha of His friend filled Ramachandra with dukha. He said, "I will kill your dushman."'

The followers of the Arya Samaj disapprove of this, because their Ishwara is an Ishwara of justice, but the Ishwara of bhaktas is partial to His bhaktas. Why will anyone want to have bhakti for Bhagwan if Bhagwan didn't favour His bhaktas? A manushya does Bhagwan's bhakti with the hope that He will fulfil his desires and protect him from misfortune. If the Ishwara only does justice and is impartial, why should a bhakta try to please Him? The Bhagwan of bhaktas always favours His bhaktas!

'Rama made a pratigna, "I will kill Bali, who has stolen your patni from you."

Sugreevoapyaaha raaje`ndra vaalee balavataam bali,

katham hanishyati bhavaande`vairapi duraasadam. 1. 60

Shrunu te` kathayishyaami tadvalam balinaam vara,

kadaachiddundubhirnaama mahaakaayo mahaabalah. 1. 61

Kiskindhaamagamadraama mahaamahisharoopadhrik,

yuddhaaya vaalinam raatrau samaahvayata bheeshanah. 1. 62

Tachchhrutvaasahamaanoasau vaalee parammakopanah,

mahisham shringayordhritvaa paatayaamaasa bhootale`. 1. 63

Paade`naike`na tatkaayamaakramyaasya shiro mahat,

hastaabhyaam bhraamayimshchhittvaa tolayitvaakshipadbhuvi. 1. 64

Papaata tachchhiro raama maatangaashramasannidhau,

yojanaatparitam tasmaanmune`raashramamandale`. 1. 65

Raktavrishtih papaatochchairdrishtvaa taam krodhamoorchhitah,

maatango vaalinam praaha yadyaagantaasi me` girim. 1. 66

Itah param bhagnashiraa marishyasi na sanshayah,

e`vam shaptastadaarabhya rishyamookam na yaatyasau. 1. 67

E`tajgnaatvaahamapyatra vasaami bhayavarjitah,

raama pashya shirastasya dundubhe`h parvatopamam. 1. 68

Another example of Rama's karuna is that Sugriva told Ramachandra, "Bali has enormous strength. How will you kill him? A terrible Asura called Dundubhi came to Kishkindha one night. He was colossal, with the head of a buffalo. He challenged Bali. Bali was furious. He caught the horns of the buffalo and threw him on the ground. With one kick he severed the head from the shareer of the buffalo. The head flew up in the air and fell close to Matanga Rishi's Ashram.

Matanga Rishi gave a shaap to Bali, that if he comes to the Rishyamuk Parvat his head will burst and he will die. Since that day Bali keeps away from this place, and that is why I am living here.

He Ramji, look – this huge rock is actually Dundubhi's head. Bali was strong enough to pick it up and throw it till here. If somebody is strong enough to pick it up and throw it, he can kill Bali."

Tatkshe`pane` yadaa shakttah shakttastvam vaalino vadhe`,

ityuktvaa darshayaamaasa shirastadririsannibham. 1. 69

Drishtvaa raamah smitah kritvaa paadaangushthe`na chaakshipat,

dashayojanaparyantam tadadbhutamivaabhavat. 1. 70

Saadhu saadhvati sampraaha sugreevo mantribhih saha,

punarapyaaha sugreevo raamam bhakttaparaayanam. 1. 71

Bhagwan Rama submitted to the test! He could easily have told Sugriva that it doesn't matter whether Sugriva has faith in Him or not; but He said, "Sugriva, look ……." and flicked Dundubhi's head with His big toe. The gigantic head fell ten yojans away. Everybody present lauded Rama's prowess.'

E`te` taalaa mahaasaaraah sapta pashya raghoottama,

e`kaikam chaalayitvaasau nishpannaakurute`anjasaa. 1. 72

Yadi tvame`kabaane`na viddhvaa chhidram karoshi che`t,

hatastvayaa tadaa vaalee vishvaaso me` prajaayate`,

tathe`ti dhanuraadaaya saayakam tatra sandadhe`. 1. 73

Bibhe`da cha tadaa raamah saptah taalaanmahaabalah,

taalaansapta vinirbhidya girim bhoomim cha saayakah. 1. 74

Punaraagatya raamasya tooneere` poorvavat sthitah,

tatoatiharshaatsugreevo raamamaahaativismitah. 1. 75

Even this did not satisfy Sugriva!

What was the reason?

'Sugriva said, "Maharaj, Dundubhi's head was very heavy when Bali threw it. Now, it has dried up and become lighter, which is why you could throw it with your big toe. Here are seven taal trees. Bali used to shake taal trees until the leaves fell off."'

People who know about trees know that the leaves of a taal tree are not shaken off easily.

'"So, if you pierce all seven trees with just one baan I will be convinced that you can kill Bali," said Sugriva.

Ramachandra picked out a baan from His quiver and put it on His dhanush. He sent it flying. It pierced all seven tall trees.'

I have heard that these trees were not in a straight line. There was a serpent that had become jada because of a shaap given by a Rishi. These seven trees had grown on its back and were standing in a curved line. Ramachandra pressed the tail of the serpent with His foot. The serpent awoke and straightened, and the trees also came into one straight line, so Rama's baan went through them very easily. This story is given in one of the Ramayanas.

'Raamayana shata koti apaaraa' – there are over a hundred crore Ramayanas! It is not that the story of Rama is imagined by some individuals; a Ramayana imagined by some manushya is different!

'Ashcharyachudamani', 'Anardharaghavam', 'Prasannaraghavam', 'Unmattaraghavam' and other similar smaller Ramayanas have amazingly beautiful descriptions of Ramachandra. The 'Unmattaraghavam' is a small booklet in Sanskrit, in poetry form. It describes Rama, maddened with grief at losing Sitaji.

Look; it so happened that Ramji because frantic when Sitaji was abducted. Now, how could Sitaji know how desperate Ramji became when He couldn't find her anywhere? So, Bhagwan created a leela when they were together in the Dandakaranya.

One day, Sitaji went to pluck flowers. She went into the hut of a Rishi, not knowing that the Rishi had given a shaap that any lady coming into his hut would be turned into a female deer. Sitaji turned into a hirani. Ramji went to look for Sitaji. She was right there, but He could not recognize her since she was in the form of a doe. She kept coming close to Him, nudging Him with her nose, and going circling round Him. Tears poured from her eyes, but Ramji did not understand.

Ramachandra experienced viyoga – He could not bear the pain of being parted from Sitaji. Sitaji saw Ramachandra's anguish at not finding her. The Rishi's Samadhi broke after some hours. His Yogic

powers told him the whole story. He told Ramachandra, 'Sitaji is here, looking at You. She is nudging You, and weeping for You, but You don't recognize her.' He removed his shaap and Sitaji regained her original form. Thus, when Sitaji was carried off by Ravana, she knew what Ramachandra would be feeling without her.

The poet Bhavabhuti has imagined Rama and Sita meeting in a state of viraha – they became separated, came together and were separated again. This strange story is given in the 'Uttararamacharita'.

'The baan sent out by Rama pierced the saal trees and then it went through the Parvat, into the ground, came out, and went into Ramachandra's quiver again.

De`vam tvam jagataam naathah paramaatmaa na sanshayah,

matpoorvakritapunyaudhaih sangatoadya mayaa saha. 1. 76

Tvaam bhajanti mahaatmaanah sansaaravinivrittaye`,

tvaam praapya mokshasachivam praarthaye`aham katham bhavam. 1. 77

Daaraah putraa dhanam raajyam sarvam tvanmaayayaa kritam,

atoaham de`vade`ve`sha naakaankshe`anyatpraseeda me`. 1. 78

Sugriva was wonderstruck. "You are the Paramatma!" he exclaimed. "You are the Swami of this jagat. It is because of some great punya of mine that I have got You!"'

Ramachandra's friendship is noteworthy. He can create and destroy this srishti by just moving His eyebrows, and yet He submits to the tests given by Sugriva in order to convince the latter that He is strong enough to kill Bali! He wants Sugriva to have faith in Him. How can anybody get kalyan if they don't have faith?

'Bhagwan embraced Sugriva and Sugriva got Gnan-vairagya for the sansara. Sugriva said, "it is the fala of my past punya that I got Your darshan. Even great Mahatmas do Your bhajan to get Mukti from this

sansara. Moksha is Your sachiv – Your secretary – who always stays with You.”’

Just as secretaries accompany Kings wherever they go, Moksha always says with Bhagwan wherever He goes.

‘“How can I pray to You?” asked Sugriva. “Things like the Rajya, stree, putra, wealth, etc are all the creations of Your Maya. And therefore, Rama, I do not desire them anymore. I experience great anand because I have got You, with a pledge. I was trying to get clay and got a treasure trove instead!”

Mridarttham yatamaane`na nidhaanamiva satpate` - it is like a potter who goes to bring clay for making pots, and when he digs, he finds great treasure!

Aanandaanubhavam tvaadya praaptoaham bhaagyagauravaat,

mridartham yatamaane`na nidhaanamiva satpate`. 1. 79

Anaadyavidyaasamsiddham bandhanam chhinnamadya nah,

yagnadaanatapah karmapoorte`shtaadibhirapyasau. 1. 80

Na jeeryate` punardaadhyam bhajate` samsritih prabho,

tvatpaadadarshanaatsadyo naashame`ti na samshayah. 1. 81

Kshanaardhamapi yachchittam tvayi tishthatyachanchalam,

tasyaagnaananamanarthaanaam moolam nashyati tatkshanaat. 1. 82

Tattishthatu mano raama tvayi naanyatra me` sadaa. 1. 83

Raamaraame`ti yadvaanee madhuram gaayati kshanam,

sa brahmahaa suraapo vaa muchyate` sarvapaatakaih. 1. 84

“Today, the bandhan created by anadi avidya is severed!” said Sugriva.’

Avidya is anadi – it has no adi; but it is saanta – it has an anta. This is the convention of the Vedantis.

All right; when was agnan created?

Somebody asked Anne Besant how agnan became anadi. She replied that foolishness is not taught at any school or college; it is there since birth, but it can be removed by proper teaching.

Agnan is anadi and saanta – it has no beginning, but it has an end. Gnan is saadi – it has a beginning, and it is saanta. Gnan arises through the Mahavakyas and destroys avidya and then it is also destroyed. This is the principle of Vedanta.

The bandhan of avidya cannot be severed by any Yagna, daan, tapasya; in fact, these strengthen avidya.

How is that?

‘ “These punya activities strengthen ahankara; they don’t reduce it. Whether it is a karta of Dharma, upasana, Yoga, Samadhi, or shanti – where there is a karta the sansara become more solid. However, abhiman is cut away instantly when a person get the darshan of Your charanaravinda. If a manushya’s mana becomes established in Your swarup for even half a moment, the fundamental agnan that is the cause of misfortune is destroyed at once.

And so, Prabhu, may my mana always abide in You, and my vani sing Your sweet name – Rama! Rama! – continuously. Even a person who kills a Brahmin, or is a habitual drunkard, becomes free of paapa by doing this. There is no paapa and no punya that cannot be removed, because paapa and punya do not get attached to the Atma; they get attached to the antahkarana. When the antahkarana is given up, the paapa and punya also disappear with it.”

Na kaankshe` vijayam raama na cha daarasukhaadikam,

bhakttime`va sadaakaankshe` tvayi bandhavimochaneem. 1. 85

Tvanmaayaakritasansaarastvadanshoaham raghoottama,

svapaadabhakttimaadishya traahi maam bhavasankataat. 1. 86

Poorvam mitraaryudaaseenaastvanmaayaaaavritache`tasah,

aasanme`adya bhavatpaadadarshanaade`va raaghava. 1. 87

Sugrivaji continued, "I don't want victory. If my patni is with Bali, let it go – I have no wish for the sukha of a patni. All I want is Your bhakti, so that the bandhan of this sansara is severed. This sansara is a creation of Your Maya. I am Your ansha. Please give me bhakti for Your charan, and free me from this troublesome sansara.

My Gnan had been blocked by your Maya up to now. I used to think that this is my mitra and this is my dushman and this one is indifferent to me. This is all the play of Your Maya, and is now removed by the darshan of Your charanaravinda."

Sarvam brahmaiva me` bhaati kva mitram kva cha me` ripuh,

yaavattvanmaayayaa baddhastaavadgunavishe`shataa. 1. 88

Saa yaavadasti naanaatvam taavadbhavati naanyathaa,

yaavannaanaatvamagnaanaattaavatkaalakritam bhayam. 1. 89

Atoavidyaamupaaste` yah soandhe` tamasi majjati,

maayaamoolamidam sarvam putraadaaraadiraadibandhanam,

tadutsaaraya maayaam tvam daaseem tava raghoottama. 1. 90

A temporary sad-buddhi arose in Sugriva when Ramachandra Bhagwan embraced him and His chest touched Sugriva.'

People sometimes get sad-buddhi due to the influence of Satsang. They become filled with a false abhiman about their wisdom. Oh, where was your wisdom all this time, my brother? This is a borrowed wisdom; it will not endure.

‘“As long as a manushya is bound by Bhagwan’s Maya he experiences pride, if he has gunas, and he sees multiplicity in the sansara. He considers things to be good and bad, dukha and dukha, mine and another’s, raaga and dvesha, etc. This is because he does not know that the mool Tattva is one.

As long as this multiplicity seems real there is a fear connected to time. This bandhan can be cut away in a flash if the adhikari has the competence. A manushya who does upasana of avidya sinks into dense darkness. Bandhans like the stree, putra etc are rooted in Maya; and Maya is Your dasi! Therefore, O Raghunandan, severe this Maya!

Tvatpaadapadmaarpitachittavrittistvannaamasangeetakathaasu vaanee,

tvadbhakttase`vaaniratau karau me` tvadanasangam labhataam madangam. 1. 91

Tvanmoortibhakttaan svagurum cha chakshuh pashyatvajasram sa shrinotu karnah,

tvajjanmakarmaani cha paadayugmam vrajatvajasram tava mandiraani. 1. 92

Angaani te` paadarajovimishrateerthaani bibhratvahishatruke`to,

shirastvadeeyam bhavapadmajaadyairjushtam padam raama namatvajasram. 1. 93

Let my chittavritti be attached always to Your charanaravinda. Let my vani do Your bhajan and chant Your name, and my hands remain busy in Your seva. Let my shareer get the touch of Your shareer. Let my eyes look continuously at my Gurudev and Your bhaktas who look at Your murti. Let my ears do shravan of Your leelas and my feet go to Your Mandir. Let the dust of Your feet always fall on me. Let me bathe in Your Tirthas, and my head bow at your charan-kamal.”

Kishkindha Kanda

The Second Sarga.

The killing of Vali.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Itham svaatmaparishvanganirdhootaashe`shakalmasham,

raamah sugreevamaalokya sasmitam vaakyamabraveet. 2. 1

Maayaam mohakarem tasminvitanvan kaaryasiddhaye`,

sakhe` tvadukttam yattanmaam satyame`va na sanshayah. 2.2

Kintu lokaa vidishyanti maame`va raghunandanah,

kritavaan kim kapeendraaya sakhyam kritvaagnisaakshikam. 2. 3

'Sugriva's paapas were all destroyed when Bhagwan embraced him. Ramachandra looked smilingly at Sugriva and said, "sakha,"'

Shri Ramachandra calles Sugriva 'sakha' and Sugrive calls Him 'sakha'. You must have heard this:

Raghuvara raavaree ihai badaaee,

ke`vata meeta kahe` sukha maanata vaanara bandhu badaayee.

Nidari ganee aadara gareeba para karata kripa adhikaayee.

Ramachandra feels happy when any vanar calls Him 'sakha'. He sees one vanar to be the same as Bharat. This is what Bhagwan's drishti is like, you know!

Bharata hun te` mohi adhika piyaare` - Bhagwan Rama says 'they are dearer to Me than Bharat.' He told Hanumanji, '*tuma mama priya lachhimana te` doonaa* – you are twice as dear to Me as Lakshman is.'

This is Bhagwan's special kripa on those who are humble.

'Bhagwan Ramachandra told Sugriva, "what you say is true, but, think about My reputation."

Sugriva asked, “Maharaj, how will Your reputation be harmed by my vairagya?”

“People will say that Rama made Sugriva His friend, with Agni as sakshi, but didn’t do anything for him,” explained Ramachandra. “They will ask how it benefited you to establish friendship with Me.”

Iti lokaapavaado me` bhavishyati na sanshayah,

tasmaadaahvaya bhadram te` gatvaa yuddhaya vaalinam. 2. 4

Baane`naike`na tam hatvaa raajye` tvaamaabhishe`chaye`,

tathe`ti gatvaa sugreevah kishkindhopavanam drutam. 2. 5

Kritvaa shabdam mahaanaadam tamaahvayata vaalinam,

tachchhrutvaa bhraatrininadam roshataamravilochanah. 2. 6

Nirjagaama grihaachchheeghram sugreevo yatra vaanarah,

tamaapatantam sugreevah sheeghram vakshasyataadayat. 2. 7

“This is how it will harm My reputation,” said Ramachandra. “So, go and challenge Bali. I will kill him with one baan and make you the Raja of Kishkindha.”

Sugriva went to Kishkindha and challenged Bali. Bali’s eyes became red with anger.’

When krodha overcomes a manushya it saps his strength. His hands and feet begin to tremble and his tongue stammers. Anger is not condusive to strength.

Sugreevamapi mushtibhyaam kaghaana krodhamoorchhitah,

vaalee tamapi sugreeva e`vam kruddho parasparam. 2. 8

Ayuddhye`tame`karoopau drishtvaa raamoativismitah,

na mumocha tadaa baanam sugreevavadhashankayaa. 2. 9

‘The two vanars began to fight. They looked identical, so Rama did not shoot a baan. Bali punched Sugriva into a pathetic state.

Tato dudraava sugreevo vaman rakttam bhayaakulah,

vaalee svabhavanam yaatah sugreevo raamamabraveet. 2. 10

Kim maam ghaatayase` raama shatrunaa bhraatriroopinaa,

yadi madghanane` vaanchhaa tvame`va jahi maam vibho. 2. 11

E`vam me` pratyayam kritvaa satyavaadin raghoottama,

upe`kshase` kimartham maam sharanaagatavatsala. 2. 12

Sugriva came running to Rama. “Rama!” he wailed. “Do you want me to be killed? Bali is my dushman in the form of my brother! If You want to kill me, kill me Yourself! You gave me the vishvas that You are a Satyavadi – now, please keep Your word; don’t abandon me! You are like a mother to whoever takes Your sharan.”

Shrutvaa sugreevavachanam raamah saashruvilochanah,

aalingya maa sma bhaisheestvam drishtvaame`karoopinau. 2. 13

Mitraghaatitvanaashankya mukttavaansaayakam nahi,

idaaneeme`va te` chinham karishye` bhramashaantaye`. 2. 14

Gatvaahvaya punah shatrum hatam drakshyasi vaalinam,

raamoaham tvaam shape` bhraatarhanishyaami ripum kshanaat. 2. 15

Ityaashvaasya sa sugreevam raamo lakshmanamabraveet,

sugreevasya gale` pushpamaalaamaamuchya pushpitaam. 2.16

Ramachandra embraced Sugriva. He stroked Shugriva’s shareer with His hand and relieved his pain. He told Sugriva, “I will make you wear a garland so I will be sure of aiming at Bali. I swear to you that this time – *raamoaham tvaam shape` bhraatarhanishyaami ripum kshanaat* – My name is Rama, I will kill your brother in an instant.”

Ramachandra told Lakshman to put a garland on Sugriva.'

Rama did not garland Sugriva; He told Lakshman to garland him. I am reminded of an occasion when I was on the stage with some other Mahatmas in a conference. The Maharani came to honour us. She garlanded all the Sadhus who were Sanyasis, but said point blank that she only garlanded the Mahatmas in saffron robes. 'I do not garland the people who wear white clothes,' she explained. Her secretary garlanded the vidvans who were dressed in white. This is the convention of the Maharanis.

Pre`shayasva mahaabhaaga sugreevam vaalinam prati,

lakshmanastu tadaa buddhvaagachchha gachchhe`ti saadaram. 2. 17

Pre`shayamaasa sugreevam soapi gatvaa tathaakarot,

punarapyadbhutam sabdam kritvaa vaalinamaagvayat. 2. 18

Thus, even Ramachandra does not garland ordinary people. He told Lakshman to put the garland on Sugriva's neck so He would be sure of not making any mistake when Sugriva and Bali were fighting.

Sugriva went back and challenged Bali again.

Tachchhrutvaa vismito vaalee krodha`na mahataavrittah,

badbhvaa parikaram samyaggamanaayopachakrame`. 2. 19

Gachchhantam vaalinam taaraa griheetvaa nishishe`dha tam,

na gantavyam tvaye`daaneem shankaa me`ateeva jaayate`.2. 20

Idaaneeme`va te` bhagnah punaraayaati satvarah,

sahaayo balavaanstasya kashchinnoonam samaagatah. 2. 21

Bali was impatient to respond to Sugriva's second challenge, but his patni, Tara, caught his hand.'

If a man is about to do something that is harmful, his patni has the right to stop him.

‘Tara said, “Don’t go! Sugriva just ran away, badly beaten. His coming back so quickly indicates that he has the support of a powerful ally.”

Vaalee tamaaha he` subhru shankaa te` vye`tu tadgataa,

priye` karam parityajya gachchha gachchhaami tam ripum. 2. 22

Hatvaa sheeghram samaayaaste` sahaayastasya ko bhave`t,

sahaayo yadi sugreevastato hatvobhayam kshanaat. 2. 23

Aayaaste` maa shuchah shoorah katham tishthe`d grihe` ripum,

gnaatvaapyaahvayamaanam hi hatvaayaasyaami sundari. 2. 24

Bali told Tara, “have no fear. Let go of my hand, and go back to the house. I will go and kill Sugriva, and come back in a little while. If Sugriva has an ally I will also kill him. How is it possible that I fail to respond if I am challenged to a fight?”

Taarovaacha

Mattoanyachchhrunu raaje`ndra shrutvaa kuru yathochitam,

aaha maamangadah putro mrigayaam shrutam vachah. 2. 25

Ayodhyaadipatih shreemaan raamo daasharathih kila,

lakshmane`na saha bhraatraa seetayaa bhaaryayaa saha. 2. 26

Aagato dandakaaranyam tatra seetaa hritaa kila,

raavane`na saha bhraatraa maargamaanoatha jaanakeem.

2. 27

Aagato rishyamookaadrim sugreeve`na samaagatah,

chakaara te`na sugreevah sakhyam chaanalasaakshikam. 2. 28

Pratignaam kritavaan raamah sugreevaaya salakshmanah

vaalinam samara` hatvaa raajaanam tvaam karomyaham. 2. 29

Iti nishchitya tau yaatau nishchitam shrunu madvachah,

idaaneeme`va te` bhagnah katham punarupaagatah. 2. 30

Atastvam sarvathaa vairam tyaktvaa sugreevamaanaya,

yauvaraajye`abhishinchaashu raamam tvam sharam vraja. 2. 31

Paahi maamangadam raajyam kulam cha haripungava,

ityuktvaashrumukhee taaraa paadayoh pranipatya tam. 2. 32

Hastaabhyaam charanau dhritvaa ruroda bhayavihvalaa,

taamaalingya tadaa vaalee sasne`hamidamabraveet. 2. 33

Tara said, "Angad has told me that Shri Ramachandra, Raja of Ayodhya, has come to the van with his younger brother Lakshman. Rama's patni Sita has been abducted by somebody. He has come to Rishyamuk looking for her.

Sugriva has established a friendship with Rama, and Rama has taken a pratigna to kill you. So, please don't go! Had this not been true Sugriva would never have had the courage to confront you again so quickly.

I advise you to call Sugriva with prema and make him the Yuvaraj. If he is made your heir he won't harm you. Protect my saubhagya; I should die before your death! There is no kalyan in having hostility with Rama."

Tara caught Bali's feet, imploring him to not fight Sugriva. Bali lifted her up and embraced her.

Streesvabhaavaadvibhe`shi tvam priye` naasti bhayam mama,

raamo yadi samaayaato lakshmane`na samam prabhuh. 2. 34

Tadaa raame`na me` sne`ho bhavishyati na samshayah,

raamo naaraayanah saakshaadavateernoakhilaprabhuh. 2. 35

Bhoobhaaraharanaarthaaya shrutam poorvam mayaanaghe`,

svapakshah parapaksho vaa naasti tasya paraatmanah. 2. 36

Aane`shyaami graham saadhvi natvaa tachchharanaambujam,

bhajatoanubhajatye`sha bhakttigamyah sure`shvarah. 2. 37

Yadi svayam samaayaati sugreevo hanmi tam khanaat,

yadukttam yauvaraajyaaya sugreevasyaabhishe`chanam. 2. 38

Kathamaahooyamaanoaham yuddhaaya ripunaa priye`,

shooroaham sarvalokaanaam sammatah shubhalakshane`. 2. 39

Bheetabheetamidam vaakyam katham vaalee vade`tpriye`,

tasmaachchokam parityajya tishtha sundari ve`shmani. 2. 40

E`vamaashvaasya taaraam taam shochanteemashrulochanaam,

gato vaalee samudyukttah sugreevasya vadhaaya sah. 2. 41

"You are afraid because it is a stree's svabhava to be timid," said Bali. "There is no cause for fear. Even if Rama and Lakshman have come, I will establish friendship with them. Rama is the sakshat Narayana. He has come to reduce the burden on the Prithivi. For Rama, nobody is His, and nobody is not His. I will catch His feet and bring Him home. He has prema for those who have prema for Him. I will behave with goodwill, not hostility. If Sugriva comes alone I will kill him.

What is this you suggest – that I make Sugriva the Yuvaraj? He is challenging me; how can you expect me to make him my heir to the throne? I am valorous – *shooroaham* – renowned the world over! And you are talking like a coward! Let go of grief!"

Bali comforted Tara with these words, and went off to kill Sugriva.

Drishtvaa vaalinamaayaantam sugreevo bheemavikramah,

otpapaata gale` baddhapushpamaalah matangavat. 2. 42

Mushtibhyaam taadayaamaasa vaalinam soapi tam tathaa,

ahanvaalee cha sugreevam sugreevo vaalinam tathaa. 2. 43

Raamam vilokayanne`va sugreevo yuyudhe` yudhi,

itye`vam yuddhyamaanau tau drishvaa raamah prataapavaan. 2. 44

Baanamaadaaya tooneeraadaindre` dhanushi sandadhe`,

aakrishya karnaparyantamadrishyo vrikshakhandagah. 2. 45

Nireekshya vaalinam samyaglakshyam taddhridayam harih,

utsasarjaashanisamam mahaave`gam mahaabalah. 2. 46

Vibhe`da sa sharo vaksho vaalinah kampayanmaheem,

utpapaata mahaashabdam munchnsa nipapaata ha. 2. 47

Sugriva attacked Bali again, but he kept looking towards Rama while fighting. Bhagwan Rama placed an Aindra baan on the dhanush that Agastya Rishi had given Him.'

One indication is that the Aindra baan is the baan of Indra, and Rama's indication is that it is Indra who has killed Bali, not Rama. The Ramayana says that Bali was the son of Surya.

When Bhagwan came as Krishna, He asked Indra for the varadaan that His friendship with Arjuna – who was Indra's son – should never break. He also prompted Arjuna to kill Karna, who was the son of Surya. In the Rama Avatar, He befriended Sugriva and killed Bali. This shows Bhagwan's impartiality.

'Ramachandra drew the bowstring up to His ear as He stood half-hidden behind a tree. He released a baan that was as powerful as a thunderbolt. It pierced Bali's chest. Bali fell unconscious with a great roar. After a few minutes he regained consciousness. He saw Ramachandra standing before him.

That Bali was Bhagwan's bhakta is evident from the beginning. He had bhakti for Bhagwan in his hriday.'

Bhavabhuti has written about this episode. He said that Ravana had established a friendship with Bali. At first Ravana wanted to defeat

Bali, but when he failed to defeat him, he made Bali his friend. Ravana was an excellent politician. He made an agreement with Bali that if anybody from Bharatvarsha attacked Lanka, Bali would stop them from going further. Had Bali prevented Rama from carrying out His plan to attack Lanka, the war would have taken place in Bharatvarsha instead.

This is why it was essential to kill Bali and make Sugriva the Raja of Kishkindha, before proceeding towards Lanka. With Sugriva as the Raja all the vanars would fight on the side of Sugriva; otherwise, they would have fought on the side of Bali. Ramachandra would not have been able to cross the sea and reach Lanka.

I had a shishya – actually, he was the shishya of my grandfather. The members of their family were traditional shishyas of my family. I was a youngster at that time. This shishya had written an excellent Rama-charita called 'Sita-Rama Charitayanam', in five volumes. This was some fifty years ago.

I used to go to their house when my grandfather visited them. They had a collection of eighty different Ramayanas – 'Agastya Ramayana', 'Lomash Ramayana', 'Kritivas Ramayana', 'Mahavir Charitam', 'Ashcharya Chudamani', 'Unmatta Raghavam', 'Anarghya Raghavam', 'Prasanna Raghavam', 'Adhyatma Ramayana', etc. I would read them whenever I visited them.

I have also read a Ramayana written by a Padre, Camille Bulke, but it is not so detailed. Ramayanas have been written in several languages, for example, Keral, Malyalam, Tamil, Andhra, Udiya, Assamese, Bengali, and others. *'Ramacharita shata koti apaaraa'* – there are a hundred crore versions of the Ramayana! If somebody boasts that he has read the Ramayana, you can ask him which one he has read. There is no cause to have abhiman, if someone has read one or more.

Tadaa muhurttam nihsangno bhootvaa che`tanamaapa sah,

tato vaalee dadarshaagre` raamam raajeevalochanam,

dhanuraalambya vaame`na haste`naanye`na saayakam. 2. 48

Bibhraanam cheeravasanam jataamukutadhaarinam,

vishaalavakshasam bhraajadvanamaalaavibhooshita. 2. 49

Peenachaarvaayatabhujam navadoorvaadalachchhavim,

sugreevalakshmanaabhyaam cha paarshvayoh parise`vitam.2. 50

'When Bali recovered consciousness he got the darshan of Bhagwan Ramachandra standing before him, with a dhanush in His left hand and a baan in His right hand. Ramachandra was wearing valkal garments and had a jata on His head. A garland adorned His broad chest. His shareer was lustrous with a bluish hue like tender leaves of the druva grass. Lakshman stood on one side of Ramachandra and Sugriva on the other side. This is the scene that met Bali's eyes.'

Vilokya shanakaih praaha vaalee raamam vigarhayan,

kim mayaaprakritim raama tava ye`na hatoasmyaham. 2. 51

Raajadharmamvignaaya garhitam karma te` kritam,

vrikshakhande` tirobhootvaa tyajatvaa mayi saayakam. 2. 52

Yashah kim lapsyase` raama choravatkritasangarah,

yadi kshatriyadaayaado manorvanshamudbhavah. 2. 53

Yuddham kritvaa samaksham me` praapsyase` tatfalam tadaa,

sugreeve`na kritam kim te` mayaa vaa na kritam kimu. 2. 54

Raavane`na hritaa bhaaryaa tava raama mahaavane`,

sugreevam sharanam yaatastadarthamiti shushruma. 2. 55

Bata raama na jaaneeshe` madbalam lokavishrutam,

raavanam sakulam badbhvaa saseetam lankayaa saha. 2. 56

Aanayaami muhoorttaarddhaadyadi che`chchhaami raaghava,

dharmishtha iti loke`asmin kathyase` raghunandana, 2. 57

Vaanaram vyaadhavaddhattvaa dharmam kim lapsyase`vada,

abhakshyam vaanaram maansam hatvaa maam kim karishyasi. 2. 58

Bali spoke softly. “Rama, what harm have I done to You? Why have You killed me? Your behaviour is against the Dharma of Rajas. To hide behind a tree and kill me is a shameful act. You have fought like a thief! Being born as a descendent of Manu, You did not fight me face to face. What fala will You get for this?

What has Sugriva to give You, which I could not give? I know that Ravana has abducted Your patni, and that is why You have taken Sugriva’s sharan. Don’t You know my bala? I have the power to reach Lanka in one great leap, tie up Ravana and his clan, and bring them, along with Sita, in one moment! Why did You need to take Sugriva’s sharan for this?

You portray Yourself as a Dharmatma, but You kill a vanar like a common hunter does. Do You intend to eat my flesh? Nobody eats the flesh of monkeys. You won’t get any Dharma for what You have done!” Bali continued his tirade.

On such occasions Bhagwan is inclined to give a rebuke. Ramachandra told Bali, “if you can’t understand the reason, I will tell you.”

Itye`vam bahu bhaashantam vaalinam raaghavoabraveet,

dharmasya goptaa loke`asminshcharaami sasharaasanah. 2. 59

Adharmakaarinam hatvaa saddharmam paalayaamyaham,

duhitaa bhagini bhraaturbhaaryaa chaiva tathaa srushaa. 2. 60

Samaa yo ramate` taasaame`kaamapi vimoodhadheeh,

paatakee sa tu vigne`yah sa vadhyo raajabhih sadaa. 2. 61

Tvam tu bhraatuh kanishthasya bhaaryaayaam ramate` balaat,

ato mayaa dharmavidaa hatoasi vanagochara. 2. 62

Tvam kapitvanna jaaneeshe` mahaanto vicharanti yat,

lokam punaanaah sanchaarairatastaannaatibhaashaye`t. 2. 63

Shri Ramachandra said, “Bali, I am a rakshak of Dharma. I go round on the prithivi with a dhanush-baan in My hand, and kill those who do adharma. A daughter, sister, brother’s patni, and daughter-in-law, all come into the same category. They are inviolable.”’

The daughter is mentioned first, before Rama mentioned the other three. Goswamiji has written:

Anuja vadhoo bhaginee sutanaaree,

kanyaa sunu satha ye` samachaaree.

‘“If a person behaves lustfully with any of these four he is a paapi, and fit to be punished by the Raja. You compelled the patni of your younger brother to live with you, and that is why I killed you. I have Gnan about Dharma-adharma. Don’t you know that the Mahapurushas go around in order to kill people who are adharmik?”’

Somebody may question this, saying the Bali was a vanar, so why should the Dharma of manushyas apply to him? This question has been raised in the Valmiki Ramayana by Bali. He asked Bhagwan Ramachandra, ‘I belong to the vanar jaati. The Dharma of the manushya jaati is not my Dharma. The Dharma You speak of is for manushyas, not for me. Therefore, Rama, what You have done is not in keeping with Dharma!’

Ramachandra rebuked Bali.

The point is that Bali wore a janeu. He woke up at dawn and took great leaps to reach the four samudras and do the ritual of Sandhya Vandan every morning. This was like an early morning walk for Bali.

You may have heard that Ravana came one day to harass Bali. Bali tucked Ravana in his armpit and continued with his morning routine. Now, if somebody does the daily puja of Sandhya Vandan, wears a janeu, rules over a kingdom with a Capital city, after a proper

Rajyabhishek with Vedic mantras being chanted – how can he be called an ordinary vanar? If such a person does adharma he is eligible to be punished.

Tachchhrutvaa bhayasantrasto gnaatvaa raamam ramaapatim,

vaalee pranamya rabhasaadraamam vachanabraveet. 2. 64

Raama raama mahaabhaaga jaane` tvaam parame`shvaram,

ajaanataa mayaa kinchidukttam tatkshantumarhasi 2. 65

Saakshhattvachchharaghaate`na vishe`she`na tavaagratah,

tyajaamyasoonmahaayogidurlabham tava darshanam. 2. 66

Yannaama vivasho grihnan mriyamaanah param padam,

yaati saakshhatsa e`vaadya mumoorshorme` purah sthitah. 2. 67

'Ramachandra said, "I have killed you because I consider your actions to be contrary to Dharma. You don't understand the quintessence of Dharma because you are a kapi."

Bali felt frightened. He said, "Maharaj, I have certainly committed an aparadh. You are the sakshat Parameshwara." He bowed at Ramachandra's charan and said, "whatever I said is due to my agnan, so please forgive me. My buddhi has become shuddha by Your baan piercing my deha. Now I will go to the loka that even great Yogis can't reach easily.

If somebody utters Your name at the time of mrityu, even out of helplessness, he obtains the Param Pada. Here, even Your roop is before me!"'

It is the agnanis who consider Bhagwan's naam and roop to be different. Only people who don't have vishvas think that Bhagwan's roop is superior to His name.

A friend of mine is a great premi of Shri Udiya Babaji Maharaj. He told Baba, 'please give me diksha.' Baba told him, 'go – chant "Radhe`-

Shyam, Radhe`-Shyam" and do the parikrama of Girirajji. I will give you diksha after one year.'

My friend went there and stayed there. He did not come back. One day Maharajji walked to Girirajji casually and asked the gentleman if he wants to take diksha. The man told Baba, 'I have no need to take diksha now. Diksha is done.'

The man did no dhyana etc. He only did japa of Bhagwan's name. He is my Baba's own person, so I am very fond of him. Once I asked him, 'do you get Bhagwan's darshan?'

He told me, 'even in my dreams I hear the sankirtan of Rama-naam. I hear the sound of Bhagwan's name in my dreams – so I get the sakshatkara of His naam.'

This gentleman is a premi of Bhagwan's naam, not His roop. To think that the naam is different from the roop is a sign of agnan. The naam is dependent on the bhakta and the roop is dependent on the Parameshwara.

When things were divided between Bhagwan and bhakta – they are brothers, the jeeva and the Ishwara – the naam came in the share of the jeeva and the roop in the Ishwara's share. The jeeva was delighted. He said, 'I have got the naam! The roop will remain subordinate to the naam. Whenever I want Bhagwan's darshan I will say the naam with all my heart andI will see the roop! Bhagwan's naam is greater than His roop!'

De`va jaanaami purusham tvaam shriyam jaanakeem shubhaam,

raavanasya vadhaarthaaya jaatam tvaam brahmanaarthitam. 2. 68

Anujaaneehi maam raama yaantam tatpadamuttamam,

mama tulyabale` vale` angade` tvam dayaam kuruh. 2. 69

Vishalyam kuru me` raama hridayam paaninaa sprisham,

tathe`ti baanamuddhritya raamah pasparsham paaninaa,

tyakttavaa tadvaanaram de`hamamare`ndroabhavatkshanaat. 2. 70

Vaalee raghoottamasharaabhihato vimrishto raame`na sheetalakare`na sukhaakare`na,

sadyo vimuchya kapide`hamananyalabhyam praaptam param paramahansaganairduraapam. 2. 71

'Bali said, "what is naam-roop, anyway? You have come, Yourself! I will go to Your loka!"'

Goswamiji has written that Ramachandra offered, 'I will sustain your life – you will remain alive.'

Achala karaun tanu raakhahu praanaa,

baali kahaa sunu kripaanidhaanaa.

Janma-janma muni jatana karaaheen,

anta raama kahi aavata naaheen.

Jaasu naama bala sankara kaasee,

de`ta sabahi sama gati abinaasee.

Mama lochana gochara soyi aavaa,

bahuri ki prabhu asa banihi banaavaa.

'Bali said, "Maharaj, I will go to Your dham. Please be compassionate and touch me with Your hand."

Bhagwan touched Bali's hriday with His hand. He took the baan out of Bali's shareer and removed his dukha.

On the one hand Rama shot a baan at Bali and on the other hand, He touched Bali with His comforting hand.

'Aanayalabhyam praaptam padam paramahansaganairduraapam' – Bali got what even great Paramhansas don't get.

Kishkindha Kanda

The Third Sarga.

The upadesh to Tara: Sugriva's being crowned the Raja.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Nihate` vaalini rane` raame`na paramaatmanaa,

dudruvurvaanaraah sarve` kishkindhaam bhayavihvalaah. 3. 1

Taaraamoochurmahaabhaage` hato vaalee ranaajire`,

angadam parirakshaadya mantrinah parinodaya. 3. 2

Chaturdvaarakapaataadeen baddhvaa rakshaamahe` pureem,

vaanaraanaam tu raajaanamangadam kuru bhaamini. 3. 3

Nihatam vaalinam shrutvaa taaraa shokavimoorchchhitaa,

ataadayatsvapaanibhyaam shiro vakshashcha bhorishah. 3. 4

Kimangade`na raajye`na nagare`na dhane`na vaa,

idaaneeme`va nidhanam yaasyaami patina saha. 3. 5

Ityukttvaa tvaritaa tatra rudattee mukttamoordhajaa,

yayau taaraatishokaartaa yatra bhartrikale`varam. 3. 6

Patitam vaalinam drishtvaa rakttaih paansubhiraavritam,

rudatee naatha naathte`ti patitaa tasya paadayoh. 3. 7

'The monkeys who were watching the fight went running to Kishkindha. They told Tara what had happened. "Guard Angad well," they told her. "Talk to the mantris and make Angad the Raja. We will shut all the City's gates."

Tara was filled with grief. She wept bitterly, beating her chest with her hands. "What will I do with Angad?" she cried. "Of what use are the Rajya and wealth to me? I will die with my pati!"

She came running to where Bali lay, weeping, with her hair undone, filled with unbearable grief. She saw Bali's shareer lying on the ground, covered with blood and dust. "Nath! Nath!" she cried.

Karunam vilapantee saa dadarsha raghunandanam,

raama maam jahi baane`na ye`na vaalee hatastvayaa. 3. 8

Gachchhaami patisaalokyam patirmaamabhikaankshate`,

svarge`api na sukham tasya maam vinaa raghunandana. 3. 9

Patneeviyogajam dukhamanubhootam tvayaanagha,

vaaline` maam prayachchhaashu patneedaanafalam bhave`t. 3. 10

Sugreeva tvam sukham raajyam daapitam vaalighaatinaa,

raame`na rumayaa saardham bhunkshva saapatnavarjitam. 3. 11

Tara saw Ramachandra standing there. She spoke to Him. "Rama! Kill me with Your baan! I want to go to the loka my pati has gone to."'

See how strong Tara's vishvas is, in her pati's prema for her – *svarge`api na sukham tasya maam vinaa raghunandana* – she says that even in Swarga Bali will not have sukha unless she is with him.

Tara did not say that she would be dukhi without Bali. She said, 'he won't be sukhi without me.' To talk of her own dukha would show her prema for him, but Tara spoke of how her pati would not be sukhi even in Swarga, if she was not with him.

Actually, the characteristic of prema is what Tara has said. To say, 'I will die without him,' is not a sign of true prema. True prema is to understand the feelings of the loved one.

'Tara said, "Even in Swarga, Bali will be missing me. He would be experiencing the dukha of being separated from his patni, and so, Ramji, Please give my pati his patni very quickly. You will get great punya – *patnidaanafalam bhavati* – You will get the fala of patni-

daan. Do the daan of Bali's patni to my pati. You have given Sugriva the Rajya – let him enjoy the Rajya with his patni Ruma."

Itye`vam vilapateem taam taaraam raamo mahaamanaah,

saantvayaamaasa dayayaa tattvagnaanopade`shatah. 3. 12

Kim bheeru shochasi vyartham shokasyaavishayam patim,

patistavaayam de`ho vaa jeevo vaa vada tattvatah. 3. 13

Panchaatmako jado de`hastavanmaansarudhiraasthimaan,

kaalakarmagunotpannah soapyaaste`adyaapi te` purah. 3. 14

Manyase` jeevamaatmaanam jeevastarhi niraamayah,

na jaayate` na mriyate` na tishthati na gachchhati. 3. 15

Na stree pumaanvaa shandho vaa jeevah sarvagatoavyayah,

e`ka e`vaadviteeyoayamaakaashavadale`pakah. 3. 16

Rama gave upadesh to Tara. "Look, Tara, pay attention to what I am telling you. Why do you grieve unnecessarily? You pati is not a subject for shoka. Tell me – who is your pati? *Patistavaayam de`ho vaa jeevo vada tattvatah* – is the deha your pati, or is the jeeva your pati?"'

Goswamiji has written – *deenha gnaana hara leenhee maayaa'* – Bhagwan gave Gnan to Tara and tok awa His Maya.

'Ramji said, "If your pati is the deha – this jada shareer made of flesh, blood and bones, born in time, and caused by karmas – it is before you. If you consider your pati to be a jeeva, the jeeva never dies; nor is it born. The jeeva is neither a purush, nor a stree, nor an eunuch. It is entirely avyaya – it cannot be destroyed."'

The jeevatma is one, because kaala cannot cut the Atma. The perception of kaala is possible because of the Atma. So, if somebody says, 'this is not correct because it was spoken in the South', or, 'this is correct because it was spoken in the North', basing his opinion on a

geographical location, the whole method of reasoning is faulty. The place can never be a basis for something being true or false.

And, if someone says that something is true because it was said in the past, in historical times, and false because it is a recent statement, tell me – how is the truth related to earlier or later?

All the discriminations based on ancient outlooks about Dharma-adharma are one-sided. None of our thinkers accept them as valid. They consider them to be childish arguments. O my brother – the Satya is the Satya, whether it was said earlier or later.

Some of us used to go to visit a Mahatma who was known for being critical of Sadhus. Chakraji was one of our group. I told the Mahatma, 'you say this because of dvesha.'

'Look,' he said, 'how does it matter whether I say it lying down or sitting up, or standing? How does it matter whether I say it because of raaga or dvesha? Is what I say true or is it not true?'

'It is true.'

'Then, why do you see my dvesha?'

This is also the point about Dharma.

It is wonderful that vichar about the Atma is not done with any connection with the kaala or desha, or the outlook of any particular individual.

Once I experienced a great insult. We were staying at the Ashram of a Mahatma. I wrote a letter to Radhaswami Dayal, saying I wanted to visit him and study their philosophy. He wrote back, saying, 'come, if you are prepared to let go of everything you have learnt up to now, read or heard.' Mahamandaleshwara Swami Bhagwatanandji read this latter and was very angry. 'All of you go away from here at once!' he said. 'I will not allow you to stay here anymore.'

Then Bhikshu Shankaranandaji intervened on our behalf, saying we were good people and should not be treated in this manner. In spite of this, we did have to bear some repercussions!

So, bring abhava into your jeevan. Whatever a person may be there is no hard and fast decision in it. The Tattva is one, it is advitiya, and it is the adhishthana, the akash of the east, west, north and south. It is the illuminator of kaala – the past, present and future – and it is Gnan-swarup. The *agnaataa-roopa aham* of the gnata, and the *gne`ya-roop idam* of that which is known, cannot touch the Tattva. How can shoka come into the Tattva?

As long as a manushya thinks about superficial matters like somebody looking disdainfully at him, or lifting a finger in rebuke, or touching unnecessarily, or serving food condescendingly – he will not be able to do chintan of the poorna Tattva.

A person who enjoys doing chintan of the karya – the effect that is this sansara – cannot do chintan of the karana – the cause that is the jeeva's past actions. If he is engrossed in the chintan of the karya-karana how can he understand the Tattva that is beyond the karya-karana? *'Akhilahaaryakaaranaparam raamaakhyameesham harim'*- how will he understand that Rama is the name of Hari, who is beyond the entire karya-karana of this world?

When Ramachandra gave Tara the upadesh of Tattvagnan, it was on the occasion of acute grief. When Shri Krishna gave Arjuna upadesh, it was on the occasion of war. Arjuna also had shoka and moha, and Tara was also sunk in shoka and moha when Shri Rama gave her upadesh.

The result of Ramachandra's upadesh was that Tara's buddhi moved away from her shoka and moha. Bali's shareer lay there. The Rajya would be ruled by someone, but Tara rose above these things. Jignasa awoke in her.

Nityo gnaanamayah shuddhah sa katham shokamarhati.

Taarovaacha

De`ho achitkaashthavadraama jeevo nityashchidaatmakah,

sukhadukhaadisambandhah kasya syaadraama me` vada. 3. 17

'Tara said, "Rama! This shareer is a-chit; it does not have consciousness. It is like a log of wood. The Atma is nitya and chetan. Please tell me, who is it that becomes sukhi-dukhi – *jeevo nityashchidaatmakah* – the Atma or the jeeva?"

Shreeraama uvaacha

Ahankaaraadisambandho yaavadde`he`ndriyaih saha,

sansaarastaavade`va syaadaatmanastvavive`kinah. 3. 18

Mithyaaropitasansaaro na svayam vinivartate`,

vishayaandhyaayamaanasya svapne` mitthyaagamo yathaa. 3. 19

Shri Rama Bhagwan said, "as long as a manushya feels 'I am the deha', he remains attached to the deha, indriyas, etc. He feels 'I am this and this is mine'. The sansara is real for him. This is because of avivek."'

Vivek means to discriminate, to separate two things that have got mixed up, like rice and sesame seeds have to be separated before they can be used, if they have got mixed up. This is called *vive`chana*.

For an aviveki manushya, this is a sansara composed of 'me and mine'. This sansara is a false superimposition on us. We think that a particular person has great prema for us, that he must be missing us very much, and we should also miss him. This happened to me when I was about eighteen or so. I undertook a long journey to meet someone I'd felt very close to, but when we met I found him to be perfectly happy – he did not even remember having met me some years back!

Thus, this world is one-sided. I had a mithya kalpana that this gentleman was dukhi because we had not met for several years. This feeling superimposed itself on my mana and I became dukhi thinking

of his dukha. This tendency is not removed by itself. If somebody tells you that a day will come when all such superimpositions are removed automatically – *na svayam vinivartate`* - that does not happen!

Thoughts about vishays keep coming. Prema for one will go and prema for another will replace it, and so on. The habit of getting attached to the sansara will always keep you trapped in it.

A long time back, I was in Mumbai once, and a very good gentleman was with me. It was his nature to pick a quarrel at any excuse. The daily strife distressed me. One day, everybody else went off on a trip to see the Eliphanta caves. I was left alone at home with this gentleman. He started an argument with me. I told him, 'my brother, just wait for some hours. The others will be back and you can find somebody to quarrel with.' When habits are formed people are unable to break out of them, especially bad habits! They get as agitated if they can't indulge as though they have not got food!

Anaadyavidyaasambandhaattatkaaryaahankrite`stathaa,

sasaaroapaarthakoapi syaadraagadve`shaadisankulah.3. 20

This sansara is self-inflicted. If a person thinks about it constantly he gets odd dreams about it. Then, with the connection of anadi agnan, the karya that is the sansara gets attached to the individual's ahankara, while actually there is nothing.

There is one point that I hesitate to talk about among Grihasthas, but I will tell you about it. Who recognizes his father? Let somebody tell me! You can die for your father, make sacrifices for him, and have shraddha that he is your father, but who actually knows that he is indeed your father?

Thus, this whole world goes on in the same way. We must have vishvas on what people tell us. The sansara has no meaning. Somebody said, 'the crow has flown off with your ear' and you ran after the crow without checking whether your ear has actually been plucked out of

your head without your knowing it! So – where are you trapped in the sansara?

Mana e`va hi sansaaro bandhashchaiva manah shubha`,

aatmaa manah samaanatvame`tya tadgatabandhabhaak. 3. 21

Yathaa vishuddhah sfatikoalakttakaadisameepagah,

tattadvarnayugaabhaati vastuto naasti ranjanam. 3. 22

Buddheendriyaadisaameepyaadaatmanah sansritirbalaat,

aatmaa svalingam tu manah parigrihya tadudbhavaan. 3. 23

Kaamaan jushan gunairbaddhah sansaare` vartate`avashah,

aadau manogunaan srishtvaa tatah karmaanyane`kadhaa. 3. 24

Shuklalohitakrishnaani gatayastatsamaanatah,

e`vam karmavashaajjeevo bhramatyaabhootasamplavam. 3. 25

Sarvopasanhritau jeevau vaasanaabhih svakarmabhih,

anaadyavidyaavashagastishthatyabhinive`shatah. 3. 26

Srishtikaale` punah poorvavaasanaamaanasaih saha,

jaayate` punarapye`vam ghateeyantramivaavashah. 3. 27

The mana is the sansara. The mana is the bandhan, and the Atma becomes like the mana and experiences the bandhan. It is like a piece of crystal that is transparent, placed beside a coloured object, and seems to be the same colour as the object that is beside it. In the same way, the proximity of the buddhi, indriyas etc makes the sansara seem to be real in the Atma, and the Atma catches the mana and believes the things that happen in the mana to be in itself.

Kama means, 'I want this, I want this also', and the mana gets trapped in these kamanas. It gets bound to the vishays. It becomes helpless and drifts helplessly in the sansara.

The gunas of the mana are created first. ‘There is this guna in this,’ and the mana gets a kamana for that object. Actually, the guna-doshas we perceive are because of our own, individual viewpoints. People say, ‘this work is white, this work is red and this work is black.’ Then, according to that, ‘this is a good gati, and this is a bad gati.’ This is how a jeeva wanders aimlessly, fettered by his karmas, till Pralay.

Karmas are done because of vasanas. Vasanas are caused by agnan. Thus, karmas are prompted by vasanas and vasanas are strengthened by karmas – and at the root of both lies agnan. As long as agnan remains, a manushya cannot be free of vasanas, just as the hands of a clock keep moving – *jaayate` punarapye`vam ghateeyantramivaavashah.’*

If there is a crack in a cup it will sink if you put it in water. If you take it out of the water and out it into the water again, it will sink again. This is the sansara for the cup.

Yadaa punyavishe`she`na labhate` sangatim sataam,

madbhakttaanaam sushaantaanaam tadaa madvishayaa matih. 3. 28

Matkathaashravane` shraddhaa durlabhaa jaayate` tatah,

tatah svaroopavignaanamanaayaase`na jaayate`. 3. 29

Tadaachaaryaprasaade`na vaakyaarthagnaanatah kshanaat,

de`he`ndriyamanahpraanahankritibhyah prithaksthitam. 3. 30

Svaatmaanubhavatah satyamaanandaatmaanamadvayam,

gnaatvaa sadyo bhave`nmukttah satyame`va mayoditam. 3. 31

When a person does some special punya he gets sukha. Punya can give wealth, a large family etc, but it can’t give sukha. I am telling you something that is a fact. Unless and until the antahkarana becomes pavitra, no manushya can become sukhi. He resorts to self-delusion and seeks sukha in transient objects.

The method for getting sukha is Satsang; the method for getting wealth, family etc is Satsang. Only when Maya and moha are reduced by associating with Sants can a manushya be sukhi; else, even great Raja-Maharajas find sleep evasive.

People in Mumbai tell me about Seths who have immense wealth, and every other worldly blessing. They cannot sleep at night unless they take a sleeping pill. Doctors and Vaidyas have also told me about this. They have asked whether I need to take a sleeping pill at night!

Look; sukha is experienced by a person who is free of vasanas. A person who has vasanas doesn't get sukha even when his wishes are fulfilled. That is why, when you get the association of a shanta bhakta, it is due to some special punya. When you associate with bhaktas you will get prema for Bhagwan. You will get shraddha for listening to Bhagwan's katha, and then you will get Gnan about Bhagwan's swarup.

A Guru does kripa. Shall I tell you when he does kripa? It is when the Guru's hriday is nirmal.

What does that mean?

If a Guru thinks that his shishya is kapati – that he has some ulterior purpose in becoming his shishya – then the form of the kapati stays in the Guru's antahkarana. Prasad means that the Guru should be nirmal and believe that the shishya is also nirmal – that there is no kapat in him. Then, the Guru gives the *vakyartha gnaana* – explains the meaning of the words, meaning, he gives his shishya an experience of that Atma, which is the Satya and anand, separate from the deha, indriyas, prana, mana, and ahankara.

This Gnan comes from the Mahavakyas.

There is a niyam in this. For example, a man is sitting here. You see him close to you but you don't know who he is, and so he is unobtained for you.

Now, what is the method for obtaining him?

You obtain him when somebody tells you who he is.

Even if something is nitya aparoksha, and you are aware of its presence all the time, but you don't know who or what it is – then, Vakya-Gnan is the only way by which it can be known. Vakya-Gnan means Gnan given by words. There is no other method.

Even the nitya-paroksha – meaning, that, which is not experienced by the indriyas – like Swarga, can only be known if we are told about it. Therefore, it is perfectly true that Mukti is obtained only by the anubhuti of the Atma.

E`vam mayodita samyagaalochayati yoanisham,

tasya sansaaradukhaani na saprishanti kadaachana. 3. 32

Tvamapye`tanmayaa prokttamaalochaya vishudheeh,

na sprishyase` dukhajaalaih karmabandhaadvimokshyase`. 3. 33

Poorvajanmani te` subhru kritaa madbhakttiruttamaa,

atastav vimokshaaya roopam me` darshitam shubha`. 3. 34

Dhyaatvaa madroopamanishamaalochaya mayoditam,

pravaahapatitam kaaryam kurvantyapi na lipyase`. 3. 35

'"He Tara! If somebody talks regularly about what I have told you he becomes free of being touched by dukha. Apply your mind to what I have said; dukha will not touch you. You will become free of karma-bandhan.

Tara! You have done great bhakti of Me in your previous birth. That is why I have given you My darshan, to give you Moksha. Do dhyana of this roop of Mine night and day, and do vichar of what I have said, and do the karmas that come before you in the flow of time."

Shreeraame`noditam sarvam shrutvaa taaraativismitaa,

de`haabhimaanajam shokam tyakttvaa natvaa raghoottamam. 3. 36

Aatmaanubhavasantushtaa jeevanmukttaa babhuuva ha,

kshanasangamaatre`na raame`na paramaatmanaa. 3. 37

Anaadibandham nirdhooya mukttaa saapi vikalmashaa,

sugreevoapi cha tachchhrutvaa raamavaktraatsameeritam. 3. 38

Jahaavagnaanamakhilam svasthachittoabhavattadaa,

tatah sugreevamaahe`dam raamo vaanarapungavam. 3. 39

Tara's dukha vanished completely after she heard Shri Ramachandra's updesh. Her shoka left her, because it had been caused by her identification with the shareer; this avidya was removed by the Gnan Bhagwan gave her. Tara was filled with amazement. "Oh! My Atma is the sakshat Brahman!" Tara felt complete contentment with the anubhav of the Atma. She became jeevamukta!

Aatmaanubhavasantushtaa jeevanmukttaa babhoova ha.

A momentary sang of Paramatma Rama was enough to cut away her anadi bandhan. She became free of paapa. Sugriva also heard the upadesh, and his agnan was destroyed.His chitta become limpid.

Bhraaturjye`shthasya putre`na yadyukttam saamparaayikam,

kuru sarvam yathaanyaayam sanskaaraadi mamaagnayaa. 3. 40

Tathe`ti balibhirmukhyairvaanaraih parineeya tam,

vaalinam pushpake` kshiptvaa sarvaraajopachaarakaih. 3. 41

Bhe`reedundubhirghoshairbraahmanairmantribhih saha,

yoothapairvaanaraih pauraistaarayaa chaangade`na cha. 3. 42

Gatvaa chakaara tatsarvam yathaashaastram prayatnatah,

snaatvaa jagaam raamasya sameepam mantribhih saha. 3. 43

Rama told Sugriva, “Bali’s last rites must be done. Tell his eldest son, Angad, to do the antyeshti karma. Obey My aagna; Bali’s antyeshti sanskara should be done meticulously.”’

It is an ordained duty to do the last rites, called the *antye`shti sanskara*. Bhagwan Rama got even Ravana’s anyeshti karma done by Vibhishan.

Maranaantaani vairaani nivrittam prayojanam – enmity is with a living person – what enmity can there be with a corpse?

‘Bali’s last rites were done with all the proper rituals, music, Brahmins chanting Vedic-mantras, etc. It was attended by all the mantris and leaders of the different groups, Vanars and others. Everything was done most satisfactorily.

Natvaa raamasya charanau sugreevah praaha hrishtadheeh,

raajyam prashaadhi raaje`ndra vaanaraanaam samriddhimat. 3. 44

Daasoaham te` paadapadmam se`ve` lakshmanavachchiram,

ityuktto raaghavah praaha sugreevam sasmitam vachah. 3. 45

Tvame`vaaham na sande`hah sheeghram gachchha mamaagnayaa,

puraraajyaadhipatye` tvam svaatmaanamabhishe`chaya. 3. 46

Nagaram na prave`kshyaami chaturdasha samaah sakhe`,

aagamishyati me` bhraataa lakshmanah pattanam tava. 3. 47

Angadam yauvaraajye` tvamabhishe`chaya saadaram,

aham sameepe` shikhare` parvatasya sahaanujah. 3. 48

Vatsyaami varshadivasaanstatastvam yatnavaan bhava,

kinchitkaalam pure` sthitvaa seetaayaah parimaargane`. 3. 49

After the rituals were done Sugriva came and bowed at Ramji’s charan. Ramachandra told him, “Sugriva, now you are to be the Raja of the vanars.”

Sugriva said, “I will stay at Your charan and do Your seva, like Lakshman.”’

A person who has many personal desires cannot do seva. He will always be preoccupied with his own needs and desires. Anybody who is preoccupied with his shareer will be too busy doing his own seva, to find time to do anybody else’s seva.

‘Sugriva told Ramachandra, “I will do Your seva.”

Ramachandra told him, “Oh, Sugriva! I am what you are – *tvame`vaaham na sande`hah sheeghram gachchha mamaagnayaa.* If you become the Raja, I become the Raja. This is seva.”’

It is important to show oneness on such an occasion to benefit the other person. Had Rama said, ‘you and I are one; let us go to the jungle’ it would not have been at all appropriate.

‘Rama said, “I will not enter the city. My brother will go and do your abhishek. Make your nephew, Angad, the Yuvaraj at once, with all respect and honour. There should be no paucity of goodwill and affection. I will stay on the nearby parvat, the Pravarshan Giri. I will not enter any city for fourteen years. My brother and I will stay on the Pravarshan Giri during the rainy season. You make arrangements for us to look for Sita in the meantime.”

Saashtaanga pranipatyaaha sugreevo raamapaadayoh,

yadaagnaapayase` de`va tattathaiva karomyaham. 3. 50

Anugnaatashcha raame`na sugreevastu salakshmanah,

gatvaa puram tathaa chakre` yathaa raame`na choditah. 3. 51

Sugreeve`na yathaanyaayam poojito lakshmanatadaa,

aagatya raaghavam sheeghram pranipaatyopatasthivaan. 3. 52

Tato raamo jagaamaashu lakshmane`na samanvitah,

pravarshanagire`roordhvam shikharam bhoorivistaram. 3. 53

Tatraikam gahvara drishtvaa sfaatikam deeptimachchhubham,

varshavaataatapasaham falamoolasameepagam,

vaasaaya rochayaamaasa tatra raamah salakshmanah. 3. 54

Divyamoolafalapushpasanyukte` maukttikopamajalaudhapalvale`,

chitravarnamrigapakshishobhite` parvate` raghukulottamoavasat. 3. 55

Sugriva bowed down at Ramachandra's charan and accepted His aagna. Lakshman went and did the abhishek etc and came back to Rama. Shri Rama and Lakshman began to live in a large crystal cave in the Pravarshan Giri. The cave was large. It glowed softly. It protected them from the rain, wind and heat. Plenty of fruit trees and flowering bushes, edible roots etc were growing close by. Ramachandra said, "we will stay in this gufa." The locality was rich with beautiful birds, fat deer and other animals. The rocks around were white, shining like pearls. Rama and Lakshman lived there in comfort.

Kishkindha Kanda

The Fourth Sarga

Shri Rama's describing Kriya Yoga.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Tatra vaarshikadinaani raaghavo leelayaa maniguhaasu sancharan,

pakvamoolafalabhogatoshito lakshmane`na sahitoavasatsukham. 4. 1

Vaatanunnajalapooritame`ghaanantarastanitavaidyutagarbhaan,

veekshya
vismayamagaadgajayoothaanyadvadaahitasukaanchanakakshaan. 4. 2

Navaghaasam samaasvaadya hrishtapushtamrigadvijaah,

dhaavantah parito raamam veekshya visfaarite`kshanaah. 4. 3

Na chalanti sadaadhyaananishthaa iva muneeshvaraah,

raamam maanusharoope`na girikaananabhoomishu. 4. 4

Charantam paramaatmaanam gnaatvaa siddhaganaa bhuvi,

mrigapakshiganaa bhootvaa raamame`vaanuse`vire`. 4. 5

Lakshmanji would go around the grounds and the gem-studded caves, and bring back ripe fruits and edible roots for them to eat. Clouds floated past, bringing showers, and then winds would scatter them – it looked as though a herd of elephants were floating across the sky. The deer and birds watched them in wonder.

Rama got such anand in watching the animals and birds that He would become like a great Muni, rapt in dhyana, sitting with his eyes open. He lived like an ordinary manushya. Many great siddha Mahatmas and Devtas came to Him to do His seva, in the forms of deer and other beings, and to stay close to Him.

Saumitrire`kadaa raamame`kaante` dhyaanatatparam,

samaadhivirame` bhaktyaa pranaayaadvinayaanvitah. 4.6

Abraveed de`va te` vaakyaatpoorvokttaadvigato mama,

anaadyavidyaasambhootah sanshayo hridi sansthitah. 4. 7

Rama was sitting quietly by Himself one day.'

When a manushya sits quietly by himself, all kinds of thoughts drift into his mana. The shakti for *manoraajya* – building castles in the air – is reduced. We should not waste time in thinking of useless things. We should think about the things that are to be done. That itself is a worthwhile activity. It is a bad thing to keep the mana occupied with useless things.

'Ramachandra is free of vasana. When His Samadhi broke, Lakshmanji came to Him and bowed down with great prema and bhakti. "Prabhu!" he said, "the upadesh of Gnan You gave me earlier removed my moha. Now, please give me the upadesh of the Kriya-marg for Your aradhana and puja. My sanshays have all been removed by Your earlier upadesh."'

The meaning of the word *sanshaya* is that the mana slumbers. It becomes oblivious of the Paramatma. *Shayana* means, 'to sleep'; it has *shaya* in it, and *sanshaya* also has 'shaya' in it. *'Samyak shayanam sanshayah'* – a person in deep sleep, completely unaware.

What is the Paramatma?

The person has no idea! He is in a state of confusion caused by avidya.

Idaaneem shrotrumichchhaami kriyaamaarge`na raaghava,

bhavadaaraadhanam loke` yathaa kurvanti yoginah. 4.8

Idame`va sadaa praahuryogino mukttisaadhanam,

naaradoapi tathaa vyaaso brahmkamalasambhavah. 4. 9

Brahmakshatraadivarnaanaamaashramaanaam cha mokshadam,

streeshoodraanaam cha raaje`ndra sulabham mukttisaadhanam,

tava bhakttayaa me` bhraatre` broohi lokopakaarakam. 4. 10

'Lakshmanji said, "please give me the upadesh for doing Your puja and aradhana through the path of kriya. Narad, Vyasa and Yogis call the Kriya-marg the sadhana for Mukti. It is also the Dharma for Brahmins and Kshatriyas who have taken the sacred thread. To do puja is the Dharma for even a stree and Shudra, and it is an easy sadhan for them. Firstly, I am Your bhakta, and secondly, I am also Your brother."'

Being a brother is not a valid claim for getting upadesh, because partiality for relatives is connected to the sansara. A bhakta, however, has a valid claim because he is connected to Bhagwan.

Shreeraama uvaacha

Mama poojaavidhaanasya naantosi raghunandana,

tathaapi vakshye` sankshye`paadyathaavadanupoorvashah. 4. 11

'Shri Ramachandra said, "there are many methods by which My puja can be done."'

If a low-caste cleaner of toilets sweeps the road, isn't it a puja of those who walk on the road? Thus, if somebody sweeps the road on which Bhagwan walks, is it not doing His seva?

Similarly, seva can be done in many ways. Who can count the ways by which seva can be done? There is no end to the ways by which seva and puja can be done. People can find new ways at any time.

Once, at Ayodhya, Shri Ramachandra's brothers held a meeting. The purpose was to divide Bhagwan's different sevas in such a way that no seva would be left for Hanumanji to do. Bhagwan's brothers charted a programme in which Bharat, Lakshman and Shatrughna would do every seva of Ramachandra. Sitaji's approval was taken.

Ramachandra saw the new schedule and smiled. He said, "My brothers, show this to Hanumanji."

Hanumanji saw that the new schedule had no seva for him to do. He said, “I will do the seva that is not on this list.”

The three brothers got into another discussion to check whether any seva was left out. They also consulted Sitaji. They came to the conclusion that no seva had been left out, which Hanumanji could do. When the programme was started, Hanumanji came and stood next to Bhagwan. “Which seva was not on the list?” asked Bhagwan.

Hanumanji said, “Maharaj, it is the rule that when You yawn somebody should snap their fingers before You. That seva is not on the list. I will do that seva. Now, I will stay with You all the time, ready to snap my fingers whenever You yawn.”

Bhagwan thought, “My bhakta should get the opportunity to do My seva.” He began to yawn frequently. The day was spent at the Durbar. When evening came Ramachandra Bhagwan got up to go to His palace. Hanumanji followed Him. The doorkeepers told Hanumanji, “you cannot go in.”

“Why does Sitaji go?” asked Hanumanji. “She is also Bhagwan’s sevika; she is His dasi.”

“Sitaji has applied sindur.” Said the doorkeepers.

Hanumanji said, “Sitaji has applied sindur only on her head, at the parting in her hair, and she can go in. I will apply sindur all over my shareer.”

He smeared his whole shareer with sindur. Then he asked the doorkeepers, ‘now I can go in, can’t I?’

When Ramachandra lay down on His bed, Hanumanji went and stood beside the bed. ‘Who knows when Bhagwan will yawn? I will stand here, ready to snap my fingers.’ Janakiji stood on the other side of the bed, wondering what to do. Then, at Sitaji’s recommendation, the entire schedule of seva was cancelled. It was decided that Hanumanji should do Ramachandra’s seva as before.

You see, nobody who is engrossed in his own seva can do the seva of another, and a person who is engrossed in the seva of a loved one forgets all about doing his own seva. New ways of doing seva keep occurring to him, the way it occurred to Hanumanji to do the seva of snapping his fingers every time Ramji yawned! Thus, there is no end to the ways Bhagwan's seva-puja can be done.

'Shri Rama explained in brief.'

Svagrihyokttaprakaare`na dvijatvam praapya maanavah,

sakaashaatsadgurormantra labdhvaa madbhakttisanyutah. 4. 12

Te`na sandarshitavidhirmaame`vaaraadhaye`tsudheeh,

hridaye` vaanale` vaarche`tpratimaadau vibhaavasau. 4. 13

Shaalagraamashilaayaam vaa poojaye`nmaamatandritah,

praatah snaanaam prakurveeta prathamam de`hashuddhaye`. 4. 14

Ve`datantroditairmantrairmrille`panavidhaanatah,

sandhyaadi karma yannityam tatkuryaadvidhinaa budhah 4. 15

According to our Grihya-sootra, the rules pertaining to household matters, a manushya should first become a dvija. Dvija means 'twice born'. When a boy from a Brahmin, Kshatriya or Vaishya family does his Yagnopaveeta Sanskara, he is initiated into the Gayatri Mantra and given the sacred thread. This is his second, his spiritual birth. He should get the bhava, 'I am of this caste, and have been initiated to the Gayatri Mantra, and I must do the Sandhya Vandan every day.' This bhava should be a perpetual bhava. *'Dvijatvam praapya maanava'* – a manushya should first obtain the status of a dvija. After that he should do Bhagwan's aradhana as per the guidance of his Guru. Whether you do puja in the hriday, in Agni, in a Murti, the Surya, or a Shaligram Shila – you can do Bhagwan's puja anywhere.

'Shaalagraamashilaayaam vaa poojaye`namaamatandritah'.

The fact is, nothing exists except Bhagwan. Bhagwan's puja is done in one place in order to establish Him in our hriday, not because He is only in that place. It is done to ensure that He has a permanent place in our hriday. Some people insist that Bhagwan is present only in the Murti, or the Shaligram Shila, Agni, Surya etc that they worship. They tend to argue with people who don't agree with them. The urge to break Mandir-Masjid etc arises, and raaga-dvesha are strengthened by such rigid attitudes.

That is not the purpose of puja. The main purpose of puja is to establish Bhagwan in our hriday. Whichever place you choose, He should come into our hriday and stay there!

You should bathe early in the morning. This removes lethargy and makes the shareer shuddha for doing puja. The Shastras recommend applying clay to purify the shareer.

'Rituals like the Sandhya Vandan should be done every day.

Sankalpamaadau kurveeta siddhyartham karmanaa sudheeh,

svagurum poojaye`dbhaktyaa madbuddhyaa poojako mama. 4. 16

Shilaayaam snapanam kuryaatpratimaasu pramaarjanam,

prasiddhairgandhapushpaadyairmatpoojaa siddhidaayikaa. 4. 17

Amaayikoanuvrittyaa maam poojaye`nniyatavratah,

pratimaadishvalankaarah priyo me` kulanandana. 4. 18

Agnau yaje`ta havishaa bhaaskare` sthandile` yaje`t,

bhaktte`nopahritam preetyai shraddhayaa mama vaaryapi. 4. 19

Kim punarbhakshyabhojyaadi gandhapushpaakshataadikam,

poojaadravyaani sarvaani sampaadyaivam samaarabhe`t. 4. 20

There should be a niyam – a vrata – in a manushya's jeevan, which should be followed by the proper method. You should do a sankalpa at the start of a Karma for its success. Then do puja of your Guru with

bhakti, with the feeling that he is My swarup – *svagurum poojaye`dbhaktyaa madbuddhyaa poojako mama.*

If the Murti is made of stone, you should give it a snan every day; if it is a picture you should wipe it gently with a soft cloth. Puja is done with fragrance and flowers – *gandha e`vam pushpa*. The puja gives siddhi.

You should not indulge in any Maya-kapat. You should have the bhava that you are doing seva. You should decorate the Murti lovingly.

If you do Bhagwan's puja in Agni you should do a havan with the proper items of the havishya – the ablutions – put into the sacred fire. If you do puja in the Surya you should offer arghya, and do havan in a vedi – a square basic built according to the instructions given in the Shastras.

If My bhakta gives Me anything with shraddha and prema – even a little water held in the palm of the hand – I am pleased; then, if a bhakta offers Me more lavish items with prema and bhakti, it is certain to please Me.

When you sit to do puja you should first gather all the things you will need, keeping them ready at hand so you don't have to disrupt the puja by getting up again and again for things you have forgotten, like the lamp, matchbox, ghee, incense, etc. You should do this yourself, not delegate it to a servant or someone else. To remember all the things you need for the puja and keep them ready before starting the puja. This is part of the puja.

Chailaajinakushaih samyagaasanam parikalpaye`t,

tatropavishya de`vasya sammukhe` shuddhamaanasah. 4. 21

Tato nyaasam prakurveeta maatrikaabahiraantaram,

ke`shavaadi tatah kuryaattattvanyaasam tatah param. 4. 22

Manmoortipanjaranyaasam mantranyaasam tato nyase`t,

pratimaadaavapi tathaa kuryaannityamatandritah. 4. 23

Kalasham svapuro vaame` kshipe`tpushpaadi dakshine`,

arghyapaadyapradaanaartham madhuparkaarthame`va cha. 4. 24

Tathaivaachamanaartham tu nyase`tpaatrachatushtayam,

hritpadme` bhaanuvimale` matkalaam jaavasangnitaa. 4. 25

Dhyaaye`tsvade`hamakhilam tathaa vyaaptamarindama,

tame`vaavaahaye`nnityam pratimaadishu matkalaam. 4. 26

After keeping everything ready, you should prepare the asana on which you sit for the puja. A straw mat should be placed on the floor, and a deerskin on top of it, and a cloth on top of the deerskin. Then sit on the asana with a pavitra mana. Where Bhagwan is, is the East. You should sit facing Bhagwan. Then, do internal and external nyasa."'

What nyasa should you do?

'"You should do the Matrika Nyasa – meaning, depositing divine powers on yourself. *Om am namah, om aam namah, on im namah,* are all Matrika Nyasas. The Murti that is the shareer is not made of bones and flesh; it is made of the *akshara-vaanee* – the sound of vowels and consonants. So, in the serial order of the vowels, do the Matrika Nyasa, Srishti Nyasa, and Samhara Nyasa. If you are a Grihastha you should do the Samhara Nyasa first, then Sthiti Nyasa and then the Srishti Nyasa.

After that, do the Keshav, Kirti and other Nyasas.

Ke`shavaadirre`yamanyaasau nyaasa maatre`na de`hine`,

ke`shavattvam dadaatye`va……..

By doing the Keshav, Kirti, and other Nyasas – people who do nyasa don't take Sanyas; Sanyas means that the person establishes the Devta in his hriday, not on his shareer, and he becomes the Devta.

After that, the Tattvik Nyasa – the Tattvas of the Prithivi, and other Nyasas – should be done. Then, the Murti Panjar Nyasa and the Mantra Nyasa should be done.

Nyasa is done in the Murti as well as in yourself. After that, all the items of puja should be arranged properly. The kalash should be kept in front of you, to your left and the flowers on the right. There should be four vessels for the arghya, paadya, madhupark, and achaman.

The hriday-kamal shines like the Surya. In it there is a flame of the chetan that is bright, like the flame of an oil lamp. Do dhyana of the chetan with the image of the inner flame of consciousness that burns steadily, and see your shareer pervaded by its effulgence. Do dhyana of the jeevatma in this manner. Then, mentally take this effulgence from your shareer – meaning, the Paramatma in the Atma – and establish it in the Murti.

Paadyaarghyaachamaneeyaadyaih snaanavastravibhooshanaih,

yaavachchhakyopachaarairvaa tvarchaye`nmaamamaayayaa. 4. 27

Vibhave` sati karpoorakunkumaagaruchandanaih,

archaye`nmantravannityam sugandhakusumaih shubhaih. 4. 28

Dashaavaranapoojaam vai hyaagamokttaam prakaaraye`t,

neeraajanairdhoopadeepairnairve`dyairbahuvistaraih. 4. 29

Shraddhayopahare`nnityam shraddhaabhugahameeshvarah,

homam kuryaatprayatne`na vidhinaa mantrakovidah. 4. 30

When an atithi comes to our house we offer water for washing his feet – this is called *paadya*. When we pour water for him to wash his hands it is called *arghya*. When we offer water for him to rinse his mouth it is called *aachaman*. Then we arrange for him to have a bath and give fresh clothes for him to wear after he has bathed. We also offer ornaments, is possible.

‘“Puja should be done with as many items as it is possible for you to offer Bhagwan. If you have the means to do so you should offer kapoor, kumkum, agar, and chandan. Offer flowers after you have chanted the mantras.

In the method of Tantra you should do the Dashavaran Puja with the method of neerjan, dhoop, deep, naivedya, etc with shraddha.

Bhagwan said, *“shraddhaabhugahameeshvarah* – with the shraddha that the Murti is I, the Ishwara.”

Bhagwan Ramachandra told Lakshman, “I am the Ishwara, but I am a bhogi of shraddha. I am the Sarveshwara, the Ishwara of all; there is nothing I need, but I eat the food that is offered to Me with shraddha.

Agastye` nokttamaarge`na koonde`naagamavittamah,

juhuyaanmoolamantre`na punsooktte`naathavaa budhah. 4. 31

Athavaupaasanaagnau vaa charunaa havishaa tathaa,

taptajaamboonadaprakhyam divyaabharanabhooshitam. 4. 32

Dhyaaye`danalamadhyastham homakaale` sadaa budhah,

paarshade`bhyo balim dattvaa homashe`she`m samaapaye`t. 4. 33

Tato japam prakurveeta dhyaaye`nmaam yatavaak smaran,

mukhavaasam cha taamboolam dattvaa preetisamanvitah. 4. 34

Madarthe` nrityageetaadi stutipaathaadi kaaraye`t,

praname`ddandavadbhoomau hridaye` maam nidhaaya cha. 4. 35

You should do a Yagna in a kund which is made to the specification given by Agastya, or do a havan in the Agni of Agnihotra, doing dhyana of the Parameshwara when you offer the oblations into the sacred fire. You should offer all the suitable substances. You should also do japa and dhyana. You should offer mouth-freshening condiments. Arrange for dancing and singing, do stuti and paatha. Do dandavat pranam.

Shirasyaadhaaya maddattam prasaadam bhaavanaamayam,

paanibhyaam matpade` moordhni griheetvaa bhakttisanyutah. 4. 36

Raksha maam ghorasansaaraadityuktvaa praname`tsudheeh,

udvaasaye`dyathaapoorvam pratyagjyotishi sansmaran. 4. 37

E`vamukttaprakaare`na poojaye`dvidhivadyadi,

ihaamutra cha sansiddhim praapnoti madanugrahaat. 4. 38

Madbhaktto yadi maame`vam poojaam chaiva dine` dine`,

karoti mama saaroopyam praapnotye`van a sanshayah. 4. 39

Idam rahasyam paramam cha paavanam mayaiva saakshaatkathitam sanaatanam,

pathatyajasram yadi vaa shrunoti yah sa sarvapoojaafalabhaan na sanshayah. 4. 40

After doing pranam, seat Bhagwan in your hriday. Then fold your hands and do namaskara at His charan, and pray, 'please save me from this fearsome sansara.' If the method includes a daily avahan and visarjan, you should invoke and relinquish Bhagwan with the proper method.

Always remember that what is in the Murti of the Paramatma has come into your hriday, and is seated there. Then, do puja of the Murti.

When a person does Bhagwan's puja with bhakti every day he gets *saaroopya* – he gets a form like Bhagwan's when he leaves his shareer.

Idam rahasyam paramam cha paavanam – this is a great secret that make a person pavitra, told by Bhagwan Himself. Any person who does a daily paatha, or shravan, of this gets the same fruit as doing the puja.

E`vam paraatmaa shreeraamah kriyaayogamanuttamam,

prishthah praaha svabhakttaaya she`shaanshaaya mahaatmane`. 4. 41

Punah praakritavadraamo maayaamaalambya dukhitah,

haa seete`ti vadannaiva nidraam le`bhe` kathanchana. 4. 42

This is the upadesh Ramachandra gave of the Kriya Yoga to Lakshman. ‘

Look; even Ramachandra’s mana changes. When He talks to Lakshman He gives the upadesh of Tattvagnan. Otherwise, He behaves like an ordinary manushya. It is the svabhava of the mana to change. People who think that they change when their mana changes, don’t understand that their Self is separate from their mana. Sometimes they get a bhava like the Ishwara’s and sometimes they get a bhava like ordinary worldly people. The higher and lower bhavas keep changing.

A question has been raised in the books of Vedanta. Once, it was decided that whichever person present was a Brahmagnani should take all the cows that were the prize for a Shastrartha. Yagyavalkyaji told his disciples to take the cows to his Ashram. Other Mahatmas objected to this. ‘If he is so greedy for the cows, how can he be a Brahmagnani?’ they asked.

Yagyavalkyaji said, *‘namostu brahmagnaaneebhyah gokaamaa e`va vayam* – I bow down to whoever is Brahmagnani; I want the cows. If you want to do Shastrartha, you can go ahead.’ There was not the slightest greed in Yagyavalkya’s mana for the cows; he said this because of his total indifference to anything worldly. However, it is a dosha for a Brahmagnani to indulge in pretence – *aparoarya doshah.* This difference of guna-dosha is only in the state of the sansara. In the Paramatma there is no guna-dosha.

Mokulpur's Baba had once told me, 'just as you come to me uninvited, so does anger. I don't ask it to come.' That day his fingers had got burnt when he was cooking.

Thus, doshas like shoka, etc keep coming into the mana of people, even people who are highly evolved.

'When Ramachandra became like an ordinary manushya He gave ashray to Maya, and became dukhi. He could not sleep at night. He kept lamenting, "Haya Janaki! Haya Janaki!"

E`tasminnantare` tatra kishkindhaayaam subuddhimaan,

hanoomaanpraaha sugreevame`kaante` kapinaayakam. 4. 43

Shrunu raajanpravakshyaami tavaiva hitamuttamam,

raame`na te` kritah poorvamupakaaro hyanuttamah. 4. 44

Kritaghnavattvayaa noonam vismritah pratibhaati me`,

tvatkrite` nihato vaalee veerastrailokyasammatah. 4. 45

Raajye` pratishthitoasi tvam taaraam praaptoasi durlabhaam,

sa raamah parvatasyaagre` bhraatraa saha vasansudheeh. 4. 46

Tvadaagamaname`kaagrameekshate` karyagauravaat,

tvam tu vaanarabhaave`na streesaktto naavabuddhyase`. 4. 47

Karomeeti pratignaaya seetaayaah parimaarganam,

na karoshi kritaghnastvam hanyase` vaalivaddrutam. 4. 48

Meanwhile, it occurred to Hanuman that Sugriva should be warned.'

It is the task of a Satpurush to set things right.

'Hanumanji told Sugriva, "you have become infatuated with bhoga in Kishkindha, and forgotten all about what Ramachandra has done for you. You have become guilty of ingratitude! Rama killed Bali to help you. He gave you the Rajya of Kishkindha. Because of Rama you got

Tara, who is one of the five pavitra kanyas, whose maidenhood remains unsullied."'

Ahalyaa draupadee taaraa kunti mandodaree tathaa,

panchakanyaah smare`nityam mahaapaatakanaashanam.

Ahalya, Draupadi, Tara, Kunti and Mandodari are the five pavitra kanyas. Great paapas are destroyed by remembering them every day.

'"You got Tara thanks to Rama. Rama and His brother are living on the parvat in a dukhi state, and you are living here, engrossed in bhoga, infatuated with women, like a common vanar! Don't you know that you have made a pratigna? How can you forget your pledge to help find Sita? You will become ungrateful and you will be killed the way Bali was killed."

Hanoomadvachanam shrutvaa sugreevo bhayavihvalah,

pratyuvaacha hanoomantam satyame`va tvayoditam. 4. 49

Sheeghram kuru mamaagnaa tvam vaanaraanaam tarasvinaam,

sahasraani dashe`daaneem prashayaashu disho dasha. 4. 50

Saptadveepagataansarvaanaraaanaanayantu te`,

pakshamadhye` samaayaantu sarve` vaanarapungavaah. 4. 51

Ye` pakshamativartante` te` vadhyaa me` na sanshayah,

ityaagnaapya hanoomantam sugreevo grihamaavishat. 4. 52

Sugreevaagnaam puraskritya hanoomaanmantrisattamah,

tatkshane` pre`shayaamaasa hareendasha dishah sudheeh. 4. 53

Aganitagunasattvaanvaayuve`gaprachaaraanvanacharaganamukhy aan parvataakaararoopaan,

pavanahitakumaarah pre`shayaamaasa dootaanatirabhasataraatmaa daanamaanaaditriptaan. 4. 54

Sugriva felt frightened when he heard Hanumanji's warning. He told Hanumanji, "do what you think is best. What you say is true; I have been at fault. You please set it right."'

It is the task of a Satpurush to set right a mistake if he can do so. To spread folly and add to it is not the task of a Satpurush.

'Hanumanji immediately sent off ten thousand vanars with instructions to bring back as many vanars as they could. All the vanars had superior qualities. They went with the speed of the wind, even though they were of different sizes.

It is not that the vanars were sent under threat. People sent under military orders are not as successful as those who are highly motivated by personal considerations. Hanumanji sent them – *'atirabhasataraatmaa daanamaanaaditriptaan'* – after inspiring them with respect and gifts.

Sugriva had come close to bringing disaster on himself. Hanumanji saved him by alerting him in time, and taking the appropriate action. Sugriva's vairagya was a 'markat vairagya' – the fickle detachment of a monkey. It was not deep or enduring, neither in the beginning, nor later on.

Prabhu pada preeti sarita so bahee,

ura kachhu prathama vaasanaa rahee.

(Vibhishan confessed to Ramachandra that he had some vasanas earlier, but they were washed away when he developed prema for Bhagwan's charan.)

Among Bhagwan's three friends, Kevat had a natural vairagya. Vibhishan's vairagya was the result of getting Hanumanji's Satsang, and Sugriva's vairagya was not genuine. It came in flashes and disappeared again.

Even such people are Bhagwan's bhaktas – they go to Bhagwan's sharan, and Bhagwan showers kripa on them. Bhagwan has not made any stipulation that only a person who has vairagya can have prema for Him. Even those who have raaga for the sansara can have prema for Bhagwan!

Kishkindha Kanda

The Fifth Sarga

Lakshmanji goes to Kishkindha City

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Raamastu parvatasyaagre` manisaanau nishaamukhe`,

seetaavirahajam shokamasahannidamabraveet. 5. 1

Pashya lakshmana me` seetaa raakshase`na hritaa balaat,

mritaamritaa vaa nishche`tum na jaane`adyaapi bhaamineem. 5. 2

Jeevateeti mama brooyaatkashchidvaa priyakritsa me`,

yadi jaanaami taam saadhveem jeevanteem yatra kutra vaa. 5. 3

Hathaade`vaaharishyaami sudhaamiva payonidhe`h,

pratignaam shrunu me` bhraatarye`na me` janakaatmajaa. 5. 4

Neetaa tam bhasmasaatkuryaam saputrabalavaahanam,

he` seete` chandravadane` vasantee raakshasaalaye`. 5. 5

Dukhaartaa maamapashyantee katham praanaan dharishyasi,

chandroapi bhaanuvadbhaati mama chandraananaam vinaa. 5. 6

Ramji was living on the summit of the Pravarshan Parvat. He called Lakshman and said, “Sitaji has been kidnapped by a Rakshasa. I don’t even know whether she is still living – I have no means of finding out for certain. If somebody comes and tells Me that Sitaji is alive, he will be very dear to Me. Wherever she may be, I will go and bring her back the way amrita was brought back from the samudra.

This is My pratigna – listen well, My brother! I will destroy the person who has separated Me from Sita!

He Sita! Your face is beautiful, like the full moon. You are living in the house of a Rakshasa! Today, even the Chandrama burns me like the blazing Surya!

Chandra tvam jaanakeem sprishtvaa karairmaa sprisha sheetalaih,

sugreevoapi dayaaheeno dukhitam maam na pashyati. 5. 7

Raajyam nishkantakam praapya streebhih parivrito rahah,

kritaghno drishyate` vyakttam paanaasakttoatikaamukah. 5. 8

Naayaati sharadam pashyannapi maargayitum priyaam,

poorvopakaarinam dushtah kritaghno vismrito hi maam. 5. 9

Hanmi sugreevamapye`vam sapuram sahabaandhavam,

vaalee yathaa hato me`dya sugreevoapi tathaa bhave`t. 5. 10

He Chandrama! Let your cooling rays touch Janaki and then touch Me. My eyes are on you and Janaki's eyes will also be on you.

Sugriva has no compassion and no gratitude! He is not bothered about My dukha. A mitra is one who considers his mitra's sukha-dukha as his own. Had Sugriva been My true mitra he would have asked about how dukhi I am in Janaki's viyoga. He is engrossed in the sukha of the Rajya and his women; he has no thought for My dukha. He has become ungrateful. It seems that he drinks heavily and indulges in kama and bhoga all the time. The rainy season is over and the Sharad ritu is here, but Sugriva has made no effort to find out where My beloved Sita is. He is wicked, full of ingratitude; he has forgotten Me. I will kill him as I killed Bali."

Iti rushtam samaalokya raaghavam lakshmanoabraveet,

idaaneeme`va gatvaaham sugreevam dushtamaanasam. 5. 11

Maamaagnaapaya hatvaa tamaayaaste` raama te`antikam,

ityukttvaa dhanruraadaaya svayam tooneerame`va cha. 5. 12

Gantumabhyudyatam veekshya raamo lakshmanamabraveet,

na hantavyastvayaa vatsa sugreevo me` priyah sakha. 5. 13

Kintu shreeshaya sugreevam vaalivattvam hanishyase`,

ityuktvaa sheeghramaadaaya sugreevapratibhaashitam. 5. 14

Aagatya paashchaadyatkaaryam tatkarishyaamyasanshayam,

tathte`ti lakshmanoagachchhattvarito bheemavikramah. 5. 15

Seeing Rama's anger Lakshman became furious. He told Rama, "You please stay here. I will go to Kishkindha and kill Sugriva, and come back soon." He picked up his dhanush and the quiver of baans, and prepared to set off.

Rama told Lakshman, "My brother, don't kill Sugriva. He is My dear friend. Just give him a good fright by telling him that he will be killed the way Bali was killed. Then listen to what he has to say and come back. Then I will do what is best."

Lakshmanji went to the city of Kishkindha.

Kishkindhaam prati kope`na nirdahanniva vaanaraan,

sarvagno nityalakshmeeko vignaanaatmaapi raaghavah. 5. 16

Seetaamanushushochaarttah praakritah praakritaamiva,

buddhyaadisaakshinastasya maayaakaaryaativartinah. 5. 17

Raagaadirahitasyaasya tatkaaryam kathamudbhave`t,

brahmanokttamritam kartum raagno dasharathasya hi. 5. 18

Tapasah faladaanaaya jaato maanushave`shadrik,

maayayaa mohitaah sarve` janaa agnaanasanyutaah. 5. 19

Kathame`shaam bhave`nmoksha iti vishnurvichintayan,

kathaam prathayitum loke` sarvalokamalaapahaam. 5. 20

Ramachandra Bhagwan is sarvagna; He knows everything. He is always filled with Laxmiji's prosperity and Grace. He is the Vignan-Atma; and yet He suffers the pain of being separated from Sitaji like an ordinary, loving husband! Here, Shri Shankar Bhagwan makes a voluntary comment so that nobody should suspect that Ramachandra has a dosha. "Ramachandra Bhagwan is the sakshi drashta of the buddhi. The buddhi keeps changing, but Ramachandra is not affected by it, because He is beyond Maya and her influence. In Him there is neither raaga nor dvesha. How can they arise in Him? He chose to appear as a manushya because of Brahma's prayer, and to give Dashrath the fruit of his tapasya. This is what agnani people don't understand."

Ramachandra behaves like an ordinary manushya to give His bhaktas a chance to talk about Him, give kathas about His leelas, enhancing His kirti. The purpose is that even agnani people can get Moksha, because listening to Bhagwan's katha destroys paapa."

Raamaayanaabhidhaam raamo bhootvaa maanushache`shtakah,

krodham moham cha kaamam cha vyavahaaraarthasiddhaye`. 5. 21

Tattatkaalochitam grihnan mohayatyavashaah prajaah,

anuraktta ivaashe`shagune`shu gunavarjitah. 5. 22

Vignaanamoortirvignaanashakttih saakshyagunaanvitah,

atah kaamaadibhirnityamaavilipto yathaa nabhah. 5. 23

Vindanti munayah ke`chijjaananti janakaadayah,

tadbhakttaa nirmalaatmaanah samyag jaananti nityadaa,

bhakttachittaanusaare`na jaayate` bhagavaanajah. 5. 24

Why did Bhagwan make Himself a subject for His katha?

Bhagwan felt, "if My stories spread in the world people will listen to them and reflect on them. Listening to My leelas will wash away the impurities of their mana."

He behaves like an ordinary manushya to create the story of the Ramayana.'

If krodha, moha, kama, etc are displayed in some places, it is to establish the appropriate vyavhar in this sansara. Bhagwan wants to teach us how we should use these when needed; but not be overcome by them. He deludes the helpless praja for its own good. In spite of not having gunas He appears to have raaga. He is nirguna, He has Vignan-shakti, but He behaves as though He has the gunas of the drishya jagat. There is no kama in Him. None of these gunas are present in the akash – how can they be present in Bhagwan?

Some rare Mahatmas have this anubhav; Janak and some others also knew it, and bhaktas – whose chitta is nirmal – understand it. Bhagwan does what is best for His bhaktas. The Vedantis have said this in a way ordinary people fail to grasp. They say that the karya is the upadhi of the jeeva and the karana is the upadhi of the Ishwara.

The antahkarana is the upadhi of the jeeva – it is the karya. The give-and-take, to do or not do, raaga-dvesha, kama-krodha, vyavhar according to the sansakara – all these stay in the antahkarana, which is the upadhi of the jeeva.

The Ishwara is the karana upadhi – meaning, Maya is the Ishwara's upadhi. Maya stays close to the Ishwara, where there is no antahkarana, and so, the guna-dusha of the antahkarana cannot touch the Ishwara. The Ishwara doesn't do things according to the mana; His actions are according to the mana of His bhaktas.

Why?

Because the Ishwara does not have a mana! He does not have prana either. He is shubhra – white, radiant! If the upadhi of the karya had been in the Ishwara He would have acted according to His mana.

The Vedantis have explained this in a very sweet way. They say, 'Bhagwan's Avatar takes place, but it is because of His bhakta's wish.

The desire is the bhakta's and Bhagwan is reflected in that desire. That is what appears.

Bhakttachittaanusaare`na jaayate` bhagavaan ajah. (24)

(The unborn Bhagwan takes birth according to the wish of His bhaktas.)

There is no other marg in the nirgunavada – the principle of the Ishwara without gunas. In the sagunavada, each bhakta believes that Bhagwan is with him all the time, taking care of him and fulfilling his desires, as though he was the only person in the world for Bhagwan to look after! They say, 'Bhagwan told me this. Bhagwan heard my prayer and did what I asked.' Bhaktas sit with their personal Bhagwan in their lap! This is the fruit of bhakti-bhava in the antahkarana of a bhakta.

Lakshmanoaip tadaa gatvaa kishkindhaanagaraantikam,

jyaaghoshamakarotteevram bheeshayan sarvavaanaraan. 5. 25

Tam drishtvaa praakritaastatra vaanaraa vapramoordhani,

chakruh kilakilaashabdam dhritapaashaanapaadapaah. 5. 26

Taandrishtvaa krodhataamraaksho vaanaraan lakshmanastadaa,

nirmoolaankartumudyuktto dhanuraanmya veeryavaan. 5. 27

Tatah sheeghram samaaplutya gnaatvaa lakshmanamaagatam. 5. 28

Nivaarya vaanaraan sarvaanangado mantrisattamah,

gatvaa lakshmanasaameepyam prananaama sa dandavat. 5. 29

Tatoangadam parishvajya lakshmanah priyavardhanah,

uvaacha vatsa gachchha tvam pitrivyaaya nive`daya. 5. 30

Maamaagatam raaghave`na choditam raudramoortinaa,

tathe`ti tvaritam gatvaa sugreevaaya nyave`dayat. 5. 31

‘Lakshmanji came to Kishkindha and twanged the string of his dhanush. The ordinary vanaras climbed onto the walls with stones and branches of trees, to ward off any attack. Sugriva’s city was like a fortress. Lakshmanji was angry. He lifted his dhanush, but just then Angadji came and bowed down to him. Lakshmanji raised up Angad and embraced him. “Go and tell your uncle that I have come. Ramachandra is angry,” he said. Angadji went immediately to do his bidding.

Lakshmanah krodhataamraakshah puradvaari bahihsthitah,

tachchhrutvaateeva santrastah sugreevo vaanarashre`shvarah. 5. 32

Aahooya mantrinaam shre`shtham hanoomantamathaabraveet,

gachchha tvamangade`naashu lakshmanam vinayaanvitah. 5. 33

Saantvayankopitam veeram shanairaanaya saadaram,

pre`shayitvaa hanoomantam taaraamaaha kapeeshvarah. 5. 34

Tvam gachchha saantvayanteem tam lakshmanam mridubhaashitaih,

shaantamantah puram neetvaa pashchaaddarshaya me`anaghe`. 5. 35

When Sugriva heard that Lakshman had come, and that he was very angry, he told Hanumanji, “go with Angad and reassure Lakshmanji with great humility. Bring him here slowly and respectfully, so that his anger is reduced by the time he meets me.”

Then Sugriva told Tara, “Hanumanji has gone to greet Lakshmanji. He is a great bhakta of Bhagwan. Angad has gone with him. I want you to meet Lakshmanji when he is on his way to my chamber. Anger is quieted when a man sees a lady, so go and explain everything to Lakshmanji, so that by the time he meets me, his anger has simmered down. Let me be the last person Lakshmanji meets.”

Bhavatviti tatastaaraa madhyakaksham samaavishat,

hanoomaanangade`naiva sahito lakshmanaantikam. 5. 36

Gatvaa nanaama shirasaa bhakttyaa svaagatamabraveet,

e`hi veera mahaabhaaga bhavadgrihamashankitam. 5. 37

Praajadaaraadeen drishtvaa sugreevame`va cha,

yaddaagnaapayase` pashchaattatsarvam karavaani bhoh. 5. 38

Ityuktvaa lakshmanam bhaktyaa kare` grihya sa maarutih,

aanayaamaasa nagaramadhyaadraajagriham prati. 5. 39

Pashyanstatra mahaasaudhaan yoothapaanaam samantatah,

jagaama bhavanam raagnah sure`ndrabhavanopamam. 5. 40

Madhyakakshe` gataa tatra taaraa taaraadhipaananaa,

sarvaabharanasampannaa madarakttaantalochanaa. 5. 41

Uvaacha lakshmanam natvaa smitapoorvaabhibhaashinee,

yaahi de`vara bhadram te` saadhustvam bhakttavatsalah. 5. 42

Kimartham kopamaakaarsheerbhaktte` bhritye` kapeeshvare`,

bahukaalamanaashvaasam dukhame`vaanubhootavaan. 5. 43

Idaanaam bahudukhaudhaadbhavadbhirakshitah,

bhavatprasaadaatsugreevah praaptasaukhyo mahaamatih. 5. 44

Hanumanji caught Lakshmanji's hand and brought him to the Raj Mahal by the main road. He said, "Maharaj, we are ready to obey any command you give."'

It should be noted that the vanars had a fortress and palaces in their city. They had wives. They became the Raja after the ceremony of the Rajyabhishek.

'Tara was waiting to greet Lakshmanji in the central chamber of the palace. She was elaborately dressed and wore beautiful jewelry. There

was affection in her eyes as she greetes Lakshmanji, calling him her devar (husband's younger brother).'

E`hi de`vara bhadram te` saadhustvam bhakttavatsalah. (42).

'"Your nature is so beautiful; it is the nature of a Sadhu-purush. You do kripa on those who have prema for you. Why are you angry? Look; Sugriva had to live for a long time without comfort or support. He went through a lot of dukha. You both saved him from dukha. Now, after a long time, he has got a little sukha.

Kaamaasaktto raghupate`h se`vaartham naagato harih,

aagamishyanti harayo naanaade`shagataah prabho. 5. 45

Pre`shitaa dashasaahasraa harayo raghusattama,

aane`tum vaanaraan digbhyo mahaaparvatasannibhaan. 5. 46

Sugreevah svayamaagatya sarvavaanarayoothapaih,

vadhayishyati daityaudhaan raavanam cha hanishyati. 5. 47

Tvayaiva sahitoadyaiva gantaa vaanarapungavah,

pashyaantarbhavanam tatra putradaarasuhridvritam. 5. 48

Drishtvaa sugreevamabhayam dattvaa naya sahaiva te`,

taaraayaa vachanam shrutvaa krishakrodhoatha lakshmanah. 5. 49

Jagaamaantahpuram yatra sugreevo vaanare`shvarah,

rumaamaalingya sugreevah paryanke` paryavasthitah. 5. 50

Drishtvaa lakshmanamatyarthamutpapaataatibheetavat,

tam drishtvaa lakshmanah kruddho madavihvalite`kshanam. 5. 51

Sugreevam praaha durvritta vismritoasi raghoottamam,

vaalee ye`na hato veerah sa baanoadya prateekshate`. 5. 52

Tvame`va vaalino maargam gamishyasi mayaa hatah,

e`vamatyantaparusham vadantam lakshmmanam tadaa. 5. 53

However, Sugriva has become asakta in kamana, and failed to go for Bhagwan's seva. I agree that this is his dosha. Nevertheless, he has sent out ten thousand vanars to summon more vanars. Great, brave vanars are coming from all directions. Sugriva will lead this huge army himself, and go with you, to bring back Sita.

Come into the mahal, and see. Sugriva is surrounded by his putras, patni, and well-wishers. Give him abhay-daan first, and assure him that he has nothing to fear from you. Then take him to Ramachandra."

Tara's words quieted Lakshman's anger.'

The wife of an elder brother is called *bhaabhee*. A bhabhi has a great capacity for settling quarrels between brothers, but women should not use this foolishly.

'Sugriva was lying on his bed in a state of stupor with his patni Ruma. He jumped down when he saw Lakshman. His eyes were reddened with drink. Seeing his state angered Lakshmanji. He said, "your buddhi is bad! The baan that killed Bali is intact. You will have to go on the path Bali went!"

Uvaacha hanumaan veerah kathame`vam prabhaashate`,

tvattoadhikataro raame` bhakttoayam vaanaraadhipah. 5. 54

Raamakaaryaarthamanisham jaagarti na tu vismritah,

aagataah paritah pashya vaanaraah kotishah Prabho. 5. 55

Gamishyantyachire`naiva seetaayaah parimaarganam,

saadhayishyati sugreevo raamakaaryamashe`shatah. 5. 56

See Sugriva's prudence here. When anybody starts speaking wildly, dignified people don't give an answer themselves. Hanumanji spoke to Lakshmanji. "Lakshmanji, you are valiant; why do you say such things for Sugriva? Sugriva is a greater bhakta of Rama than even you!"

This is what a mantri should be like – mantris save their Rajas whenever possible. Hanumanji said, “Sugrivaji stays awake day and night to do Rama’s work. Look, krores of vanars have been summoned for Rama’s work.They will locate Sitaji in a few days, and Rama’s work will be accomplished.”

Shrutvaa hanumato vaakyam saumitrirlajjitoabhavat,

sugreevoapyarghyapaadyaadyairlakshmanam samapoojayat. 5. 57

Aalingya praaha raamasya daasoaham te`na rakshitah,

raamah svate`jasaa lokaan kshanaardhainaiva je`shyati. 5. 58

Sahaayamaatrame`vaaham vaanaraih sahitah prabho,

saumitrirapi sugreevam praaha kinchinmayoditam. 5. 59

Tatkshamasva mahaabhaaga pranayaadbhaashitam mayaa,

gachchhaamoadyaiva sugreeva raamastishthati kaanane`. 5. 60

E`ka e`vaatidukhaartto jaanakeevirahaatprabhuh,

tathe`ti rathamaaruhya lakshmane`na samanvitah. 5. 61

Vaanaraih sahito raajaa raamame`vaanvapadyata. 5. 62

Bhe`reemridangair shve`taatapatrairvyajanaishcha shobhitah,

neelaangadaargharhanumatpradhaanaih samaavrito raaghavamabhyagaaddharih. 5. 63

‘Lakshmanji felt some remorse for his harsh words to Sugriva. Sugriva did Lakshmanji’s puja with arghya-paadya etc, and then – *aalingya praaha* – Lakshmanji embraced Sugriva. Sugrivaji said, “I know that Rama can destroy all the three lokas in just half a minute. People like me are mere instruments used by Him.” Lakshmanji also asked for forgiveness for his harsh words.’

Saumitrirapi sugreevam praaha tatkshamasva mahaabhaaga.

We should never hesitate to ask for forgiveness if we have made a mistake. It is wrong to not admit our mistake and say sorry for it.

'Lakshmanji said, "let us not delay. Ramachandra is alone in the van and He is dukhi for Sita."

A chariot was sent for. Sugriva and Lakshmanji got into the chariot. They were followed by a band playing music and a host of vanars. They carried a ceremonial umbrella over Sugriva's head. They took vegetables with them. Neel, Angad and Hanuman accompanied them. Sugriva went to Rama like a Raja.'

It has been said that there are huge apes in the African jungles who tear off their skin and drum their chests to summon others of their kind. These vanars certainly had tails, but it seems they were cultured and civilised. They could make bridges, they recognized poison, they could make a chita, and they used fire. All these things are mentioned.

Kishkindha Kanda

The Sixth Sarga.

The search for Sita, the character of Svayamprabha.

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha.

Drishtvaa raamam samaaseenam guhaadvaari shilaatale`,

chailaajinadharam shyaamam jataamauliviraajitam. 6. 1

Vishaalanayanam shaantam smitachaarumukhaambujam,

seetaaviraha santaptam pashyantam mrigapakshinah. 6. 2

Rathaaddooraatsamutpatya ve`gaatsugreevalakshmanau,

raamasya paadayoragre` pe`taturbhakttisanyutau. 6. 3

Raamah sugreevamaalingya prishtvaanaamayamantike`,

sthaapayitvaa yathaanyaayam poojayaamaasa dharmavit. 6. 4

Ramachandra was sitting on a large boulder just outside the entrance to the gufa. He sat on a deerskin, wearing valkal and a jata. He was calm and smiling gently in spite of suffering at being parted from Sita. His face was lit up by an inner radiance. Sugriva came and fell at His feet. Rama embraced him and asked about his well-being.'

Braahmanam kushalam prichchhe`t kshatram prichchhe`danaamayam. The etiquette is that when you meet a Brahmin you should ask whether his Yagna-Yaag etc are going well, and when you meet a Kshatriya you should ask about his physical well-being.

'Ramachandra made Sugriva sat beside Him and asked about his health.

Tatoabraveedraghushre`shtham sugreevo bhakttinamradheeh,

de`va pashya samaayaanteem vaanaraanaam mahaachamoom. 6. 5

Kulaachalaadrisambhootaa me`rumandarasannibhaah,

naanaadveepasarichchheailavaasinah parvatopamaah. 6. 6

Asankhyaataah samaayaanti harayah kaamaroopinah,

sarve` de`vaanshasambhootaah sarve` yuddhavishaaradaah. 6. 7

Sugriva spoke with great humility to Ramachandra. “Look, Maharaj – see what a vast army of vanaras is coming. They come from different places, like Kulachal. Some of them are huge, like little mountains. They are innumerable. They are kaama-roop, able to change their forms so that they cannot be recognized.”’

Once Ravana was told, ‘you cannot defeat Rama in a straight battle; you will have to use Maya.’ Ravana changed the Rakshasas into cows with long, sharp horns. Nobody would kill a cow. The cows started to kill the vanars with impunity. Confusion reigned. Then Vibhishan said, ‘Maya must be fought with Maya. Prabhu, do a Maya by which the vanars turn into lions.’ Bhagwan Ramachandra released a baan that turned the vanars into lions, who attacked the cows. The cowardly Rakshasas reverted to their orinignal forms.

Atra ke`chidgajabalaah ke`chiddashagajopamaah,

gajaayutabalaah ke`chidanye`amitabalaah Prabho. 6. 8

Ke`chidajjanakootaabhaah ke`chitkanakasannibhaah,

ke`chidrakttaantavadanaa deerghabaalaastathaapare`. 6. 9

Shuddhasfatikasankaashaah ke`chidraakshasaasannibhaah,

garjantah parito yaanti vaanaraa yuddhaakaankshanah. 6. 10

‘“Some vanars look like black hills, some like golden hills, and some are white. Some have red faces and the faces of some are long. There are some whose faces look like Rakshasas!” said Sugriva. “They are roaring as though challenging people to fight. Just look at them,

Maharaj! All the vanars are trained to fight, and they are all disciplined. They will carry out Your commands.

There is another advantage – there is no need to arrange for their rations. An army of manushyas would need to be given rations, clothes, arms, etc. There is no need to arrange for these for vanars."

Tvadaagnaakaarinah sarve` falamoolaashanaah prabho,

rikshaanaamadhipo veero jaambavaannaama buddhimaan. 6. 11

E`sha me` mantrinaam shre`shthah kotibhaallookavrindapah,

hanoomaane`sha vikhyaato mahaasattvaparaakramah. 6. 12

Vaayuputroatite`jasvee mantree buddhimataam varah,

nalo neelashcha gavayo gavaaksho gandhamaadanah. 6. 13

Sharabho maindavashchaiva gajah panasa e`va cha,

baleemukho dadhimukhah sushi`nastaara e`va cha. 6. 14

Ke`saree cha mahaasattvah pitaa hanumato balee,

e`te` te` yuthapaa raama praadhaanye`na mayoditaah. 6. 15

Mahaatmaano mahaaveeryaah shakratulyaparaakramah,

e`te` pratye`katha kotikotivaanarayoothapaah. 6. 16

Tavaagnaakaarinah sarve` sarve` de`vaanshasambhavaa,

e`sha vaalisutah shreemaanangado naama vishrutah. 6. 17

Vaalitulyabalo veero raakshasaanaam balaantakah,

e`te` chaanye` cha bahavastvadarthe` tykttajeevitaah. 6. 18

Then Sugriva pointed to Jambavan, the great bear. "This is Jambavan, a senior mantri. This is Vayu-putra Hanumanji. These are Neel-Nala, Gava-Gavaksha, Gandhamadan-Dadhimukha, Sharabh, Maindav, Gaja, Panas, Balimukha, and Sushen.

Taar Kesari is Hamunan's pita. All of them are the Generals of their groups. Each of them has the capacity to defeat Indra in battle. Under each is an army of one crore – ten million – vanars. They all have an ansha of a Devta in them. They will obey any order You give.

This is Angad, who is as strong as his father Bali. There are many more vanars and bears who are ready to fight for You, kill for You and be killed for You. You just have to give them Your command."

Yoddhaarah parvataagre`shcha nipunaah shatrughaatane`,

aagnaapaya raghushre`shtha sarve` te` vashavartinah. 6. 19

Raamah sugreevamaalingya harshapoornaashrulochanah,

praaha sugreeva jaanaasi sarvam tvam kaaryagauravam. 6. 20

Maarganaartham hi jaanakyaa niyunkshva yadi rochate`,

shrutvaa raamasya vachanam sugreevah preetamaanasah. 6. 21

Pre`shayaamaasa balino vaanaraan vaanararshabhah,

dikshu sarvaasu vividhaanvaanaraan pre`shya satvaram. 6. 22

Dakshinaam dishamatyartham prayatne`na mahaabalaam,

yuvaraajam jaambavantam hanoomantam mahaabalam. 6. 23

Nalam sushe`nam sharabham maindam dvividame`va cha,

pre`shayaamaasa sugreevo vachanam che`damabraveet. 6. 24

Vichinvantu prayatne`na bhavanto jaanakeem shubhaam,

maasaadarvaannivartadhvam machchhasanapurahsaraah. 6. 25

Seetaamadrishtvaa yadi vo maasaadoordhvam dinam bhave`t,

tadaa praanaantikam dandam mattah praapsyatha vaanaraah. 6. 26

Rama embraced Sugriva. "Sugriva," He said, "you are ideed very wise. You have understood the magnitude of My task. Now, if you think it proper, give the vanars the aagna to look for Janaki. In Kishkindha, the

people are saying that nobody knows who has abducted her, or where she is.

It is very important that some things are kept secret. A Raja has to keep his thoughts confinced to himself and his trusted people, for him to keep his Rajya safe. When the vanars set off to look for Sitaji they will secretly urge other vanars to join them and the army will become even bigger, while Ravana will think that we don't know where Janaki is."

Groups of vanars were dispactched in all directions. The group chosen to go south included Yuvaraj Angad, Jambavan, Hanuman, Neel, Sushen, and Sharabh. Sugriva told all the vanars that they were to return to Kishkindha within a month, whether they succeeded in finding Sitaji or not. "If any vanar is successful in finding Sitaji, his delay will not be punished, but anybody else who delays will be put to death," said Sugriva.

Iti prasthaapya sugreevo vaanaraan bheemavikramaan,

raamasya paarshve` shreeraamam natvaa chopavive`sha sah. 6. 27

Gachchhantam maaruti drishtvaa raamo vachanamabraveet,

abhignaarthame`tanme` hyanguleeyakamuttamam. 6. 28

Mannaamaksharasanyukttam seetaayai deeyataam rahah,

asmin kaarye` pramaanam hi tvame`va kapisattama,

jaanaami sattvam te` sarvam gachchha panthaah shubhastava. 6. 29

Having made his announcement, Sugriva came and sat with Rama again. Hanumanji was about to leave, but Ramachandra called him. Ramachandra knew that it was Hanumanji who would go to Lanka and meet Sitaji. He gave His ring to Hanumanji, so that Janakiji would know that he is Rama's emissary.'

In earlier times, Rajas wore a ring that was used as a seal of their authority. A Raja never gave this signet ring to anybody.

'Bhagwan Ramachandra gave His ring to Hanumanji. The ring had Rama's name inscribed on it. "Give this ring to Sitaji when you are alone with her," He said. "Assure her on My behalf, and on the behalf of the army, whatever promise you want to make to her – *asmin kaarye` pramaanam hi tvam* – put the seal on any document you want – it will be accepted as My stamp. I am aware of everything. *Gachchha panthaa shubhastava* – your path is auspicious."

E`vam kapeenaam raagnaa te` visrishtaah parimaargane`,

seetaayaa angadamukhaa babhramustatra tatra ha. 6. 30

Bhramanto vindhyagahane` dadrishuh parvatopamam,

raakshasam bheeshanaakaaram bhakshayantam mrigaam gajaan. 6. 31

Raavanoayamiti gnaatvaa ke`chidvaanarapungavaah,

jaghnuh kilakilaashabdam munchato mushtibhih kshanaat. 6. 32

Naayam raavana ityukttvaa yayurnyanmahdvanam,

trishaartaah salilam tatra naavindan haripungavaah. 6. 33

All the vanars set off in their alloted directions. Angad's group went to the Vindhya hills where they encountered a terrible Rakshasa. The vanars assumed him to be Ravana and began to pummel him mercilessly. The Rakshasa died. "This cannot be Ravana," said the vanars. "Ravana cannot be killed so easily."

Vibhramanto mahaaranye` shushkakanthoshthataalukaah,

dadrishurgahvaram tatra trinagulmaavritam mahat. 6. 34

Aardrapakshaan kraunchahansaannisritaandadrishustatah,

atraaste` salilam noonam pravishaamo mahaaguhaam. 6. 35

Ityuktvaa hanumaanagre` pravive`sha tamanvayuh,

sarve` parasparam dhritvaa baahoonbaahubhirutsukaah. 6. 36

Andhakaare` mahaddooram gatvaapashyan kapeeshvaraah,

jalaashayaanmaninibhatoyaan kalpadrumopamaan. 6. 37

Vrikshaanpakvafalairnamraanmadhudronasamanvitaan,

grihaan sarvagunope`taan manivastraadipooritaan. 6. 38

Divyabhakshyaannasahitaanmaanushaih parivarjitaan,

vismitaastatra bhavane` divye` kanakavishtare`. 6. 39

Prabhayaa deepyamaanaam tu dadrishuh striyame`kakaam,

dhyaayanteem cheeravasanaam yogineem yogamaasthitaam. 6. 40

The vanars were extremely thirsty. They saw a cave where lush grass grew at its opening, and went into it in search of water. Further inside was a lush forest with animals and birds. Hanumaji lead the way, and the vanars followed, holding on to him. The cave became very dark; then it lightened and they came out to the open sky. There was a lake of sparkling blue water, and trees laden with fruit. There was a beautiful house with beautiful garments, gems, and delicious food spead out invitingly, but not manushya in sight. The vanars wondered at this and went further. They came to a pagoda. A Deviji was sitting on a golden throne, in deep meditation. She was a Yogini.

Prane`mustaam mahaabhaagaam bhakttyaa bheetyaa cha vaanaraah,

drishtvaa taan vaanaraande`vee praaha yooyam kimaagataah. 6. 41

Kuto vaa kasya dootaa vaa matsthaanam kim pragharshatha,

tachchhrutvaa hanumaanaaha shrunu vakshyaami de`vi te`. 6. 42

Ayodhyadhipatih shreemaan raajaa dasharathah prabhuh,

tasya putro mahaabhaago jye`shtho raama iti shrutah. 6. 43

Pituraagnaam puraskritya sabhaaryah saanujo vanam,

gatastatra hritaa bhaaryaa tasya saadhvee duraatmanaa. 6. 44

Raavane`na tato raamah sugreevam saanujo yayau,

sugreevo mitrabhaave`na raamasya priyavallabhaam. 6. 45

Mrigayadhvamiti praaha tato vayamupaagataah,

tato vanam vichinvanto jaanakeem jakakaamkshanah. 6. 46

Pravishtaa gahvaram ghoram daivaadatra samaagataah,

tvam vaa kimarthamatraasi kaa vaa tvam vada nah shubhe`. 6. 47

All the vanars bowed down to the Yogini, with both bhakti and bhaya – *bhaktyaa bheetyaa cha* – in their mana. The lady asked, "why have you come here? Why are you soiling my place?"

Hanumanji explained respectfully, "we are emissaries of Rama, the eldest son of Raja Dashrath of Ayodhya. He came to the van with His patni and younger brother, at the aagna of His father. His patni has been kidnapped. We look for her by the order of our Raja Sugriva, because of his friendship with Ramachandra. We came into this gufa looking for water because we were extremely thirsty. Please tell me about yourself."

Yoginee cha tathaa drishtvaa vaanaraan praaha hrishtadheeh,

yathe`shtam falamoolaani jagdhvaa peetvaamritam payah. 6. 48

Aagachchhata tato vakshye` mama vrittaantamaaditah,

tathe`ti bhukttvaa peetvaa cha hrishtaaste` sarvavaanaraah. 6. 49

De`vyaah sameepam gatvaa te` baddhaanjaliputaah sthitaah,

tatah praaha hanoomantam yoginee divyadarshanaa. 6. 50

The Yogini told them, "first, go and drink water, eat fruits and roots. The water here is like amrita. When you are refreshed, come to me, and I will tell you about myself."'

If someone comes to your house hungry and thirsty, it is not proper to start chatting until he has been offered refreshments and is fresh again.

‘The vanars drank their fill and ate the juicy fruits and roots. Then they came to the Yogini.

He`maa naama puraa divyaroopinee vishvakarmanah,

putree mahe`sham nritye`na toshayaamaasa bhaaminee. 6. 51

Tushto mahe`shah pradadaavidam divyapuram mahat,

atra sthitaa saa sudatee varshaanaamayutaayutam. 6. 52

Tasyaa aham sakhee vishnutatparaa mokshakaankshinee,

naamnaa svayamprabhaa divyagandharvatanayaa puraa. 6. 53

Gachchhantee brahmalokam saa maamaahe`dam tapashchara,

atraiva nivasanteem tvam sarvapraanivivarjite`. 6. 54

Tre`taayuge` daasharathirbhootvaa naaraayanoavyayah,

bhoobhaaraharanaarthaaya vicharishyati kaanane`. 6. 55

Maarganto vaanaraastasya bhaaryaamaayanti te` guhaam,

poojayitvaatha taan natvaa raamam stutvaa prayatnatah. 6. 56

Yaataasi bhavanam vishnoryogigamyam sanaatanam,

itoaham gantumichchhaami raamam drashtum tvaraanvitaa. 6. 57

“There was a lady called Hema. She was the putri of Vishvakarma,” said the Yogini. “She was an excellent dancer. Shankarji was pleased with her dancing and had this beautiful place created for her. She lived here for many years. I was her sakhi. I am a bhakta of Vishnu Bhagwan. My name is Svayamprabha. When Hema went to Brahmaloka she told me to stay here. She told me that nobody would come here until the Treta Yoga, when vanars would come. She told me to feed them well and then go to get Rama’s darshan. I would be fulfilled.

Now, you all please shut your eyes. You will get out of here, and I will go to Rama."

Yooyam pidadhvamaksheeni gamishyatha bahirguhaam,

tathaiva chakruste` ve`gaadgataah poorvasthitam vanam. 6. 58

Saapi tyakttvaa guhaam sheeghram yayau raaghavasannidhim,

tatra raamam sasugreevam lakshmanam cha dadarsha ha. 6. 59

Kritvaa pradakshinam raamam pranamya bahushah sudheeh,

aaha gadgadayaa vaachaa romaanchitatanooruhaa. 6. 60

The vanars shut their eyes and found themselves back in the van. The Yogini left her gufa and went to Bhagwan Ramachandra. She did His darshan. She also got the darshan of Sugriva and Lakshman. She did Rama's pradakshina and bowed down to Him. She did Rama's stuti with a voice that was husky with prema. Her shareer tingled with prema.

Daasee tavaaham raaje`ndra darshanaarthamihaagataa,

bahuvarshasahasraani taptam me` dushcharam tapah. 6. 61

Guhaayaam darshanaartham te` falitam me`adya tattapah,

adya hi tvaam namasyaami maayaayaah paratah sthitam. 6. 62

Sarvabhoote`shu chaalakshyam bahirantaravasthitam,

yogamaayaajavanikaachchhanno maanushavigrahah. 6. 63

Na lakshyase`agnaanadrishaam shailoosha iva roopadhrik,

mahaabhaagavataanaam tvam bhakttiyogavidhitsayaa. 6. 64

Avateernoasi bhagavan katham jaanaami taamasee,

loke` jaanaatu yah kashchittava tattvam raghoottama. 6. 65

'Daasee tavaaham' – I have done extensive tapasya, and come for Your darshan. My tapasya is fulfilled today – the Paratpara Paramatma

who is beyond Maya is in front of my eyes! I do pranam to You! You are present in everything. Everything is seen but You are not seen. You are within and without."'

In the Gita Bhagwan has told Arjuna that He is in the jada as well as in the chetan; in the unmoving and in the moving objects. It is not that the Atma within is Bhagwan and the shareer outside is the Shaitan! *'Bahirantasha bhootaanaam'* – it is He who is inside as well as outside. Nothing exists but Bhagwan. All the dukha in the world is due to the disorder of the mana. From the viewpoint of the Tattva everything is the Paramatna.

'"You have covered yourself with the covering of Yoga-Maya, Prabhu!"'

What is the covering of Yoga-Maya?

'People should do Yoga-abhyasa to look for Me', because Bhagwan is not in front of them. People should undertake the practice of Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga and Karma-Yoga. This is why Bhagwan keeps Himself hidden. There is only a covering of Maya; it is Bhagwan in the form of the manushyas. Agnani people don't recognize Him the way the audience doesn't recognize a dancer who comes dressed up as different characters in a play.

Yathaa ane`kana roopa dhari nritya karayi nata koyi,

Soyee-soyee bhava dikhaavayi aapuna hoya na soyi.

'"Bhagwan assumes many forms so that the great bhagavat people in this world do His bhakti. He takes Avatars. How will a poor woman like me know You, Prabhu? Those who recognize You can know You; I have no grudge against them – *loke` jaanaatu yah kashchittvam raghoottama.*

Mamaitade`va roopam te` sadaa bhaatu hridaalaye`,

raama te` paadayugalam darshitam mokshadarshanam. 6. 66

Adarshanam bhavaarnaanaam sanmaargaparidarshanam,

dhanaputrakalannadivibhootiparidarpitah,

akinchanadhanam tvaadya naabhidhaatum janoarhati. 6. 67

Nivrittagunamaargaaya nishkinchanadhanaaya te`. 6. 68

Others may know but I don't know. Let this roop of Yours always stay in my hriday. In this roop there is the darshan of Moksha and adarshan of the sansara-sagar."'

Do you know who is not qualified to get Gnan?

A person who does not have the wealth of shama-dama etc, who does not have jignasa or mumujsha is not an adhikari of Gnan.

And, who is an anadhikari for Dharma?

A person is not an adhikari for Dharma if he lacks the means or the abilty to do Dharma, and if he is forbidden by the Shastras to do Dharma.

And, who is an anadhikari for bhakti?

How can anybody be an anadhikari for bhakti?

Yes, there is a disqualification even for doing bhakti!

Dhanaputrakalannadivibhootiparivartitah,

akinchana dhanam tvaadya naabhidhaatum janoarhati. (67)

If a person has abhiman about his wealth, son, wife, glory etc he is not an adhikari for bhakti. His bhakti is an ornament only for his ego, not for Bhagwan. People say, 'he is a Seth and he has bhaki.' To be called a Seth flatters his ahankara, and to be called a bhakta also enhances his ahankara.

Bhakti should be such that it is a praise of Bhagwan.

A person cannot be Bhagwan's bhakta is he has vanity. Bhagwan is the treasure of the poor. An abhimani is not an adhikari for even taking Bhagwan's name! There is a shloka in the Bhagwat:

Janmaishvaryashrutishreebhire`dhamaanamadah pumaan,

naivaarhatyabhidhaatum vai tvaamakimchanagocharam.

(1.8. 26)

The abhiman for being born in a noble lineage, possessing great wealth and power, having great learning etc makes a person intoxicated, and he loses the right to take Bhagwan's name. Bhagwan is the all-in-all of the poor and humble Mahatmas who have no worldly assets.

Namah svaatmaabhiraamaaya nirgunaaya gunaatmane`,

kaalaroopinameeshaanamaadimadhyaantavarjitam. 6. 69

Samam charantam sarvatra manye` tvaam purusham param,

de`va te` che`shtitam kashchinna ve`da nrividambanam. 6. 70

Na te`asti kashchiddayito dve`shyo vaapara e`va cha,

tvanmaayaapihitaatmaanastvaam pashyanti tathaavidham. 6. 71

Ajasyaakartureeshasya de`vatiryannaraadishu,

janmakarmaadikam yadyattadatyantavidamanam. 6. 72

Bhagwan is beyond the path of the gunas; He is the wealth of those who have nothing. He is Atmabhiram – fully happy within Himself. He is nirguna, and He is the Atma of the gunas. He is the form of mrityu; He is Shiva. He is in everything and He is at the beginning, middle and end of everything. He is equal in all beings that wander here and there. The world knows not what He does, when – *de`va te` che`shtitam kinchanna ve`da nrividambanam (70).*

'"You do a drama of being a manushya in this world. Nobody understands what You wish to do. There is nobody who Bhagwan

hates or loves; nobody who is His or not His. Only those who are affected by Maya think that somebody is dear – or not dear – for Bhagwan. He is the Ishwara and He assumes the forms of an animal, bird, manushya or Devta at will. All this is a drama of His."'

Tvaamaahuraksharam jaatam kathaashravanasiddhaye`,

ke`chitkosalaraajasya tapasah falasiddhaye`. 6. 73

Kausalyaa praarthyamaanam jaatamaahuh pare` janaah,

dushtaraakshasabhoobhaaraharanaayaarthito vibhuh. 6. 74

Brahmanaa nararoope`na jaatoayamiti ke`chana,

shrunvanti gaayanti cha ye` kathaaste` raghunandana. 6. 75

'"Think of it! People ask why Bhagwan takes an Avatar, or why He did something. A man is walking on the road – why is he walking, and where is he going? Nobody thinks about that. A mosquito is buzzing around, but you don't know where it came from or where it will go. Yet people try to find out why the Ishwara does the things He does!

Actually, people don't manifest Gnan about the Ishwara; they manifest the power of their buddhi!"'

A friend of mine said that when people establish the Ishwara by the use of their buddhi and reasoning, they don't establish the Ishwara; they establish their buddhi. It is showing people how clever they are!

'"Thus, nobdy can understand easily why Bhagwan does the things He does. The reason Bhagwan takes an Avatar is that a story will be made to which people will listen, and get bhakti for Him. Some people say that Bhagwan took an Avatar to fulfil Dashrath's tapasya. Some say He took an Avatar at Kausalya's prarthana, and some say it was to kill the wicked Rakshasas and reduce the Prithivi's burden. And some say He came because Brahmaji's prayed to Him to come. All this is correct, but they all combine to make Bhagwan's katha.

Shrinvanti gaayanti cha ye` kathaaste` - people listen to Bhagwan's katha, and sing about it."'

The root of this shloka is also in the root of a shlokain the Bhagwat.

Shrinvanti gaayanti grinantybheekshnashah smaranti nandanti tave`hitam janaah,

ta e`va pashyantyachire`na taavakam bhavapravaahoparamam padaambujam.

(1.8. 36)

Bhagwan's leela is done so that people can hear about it. If you find someone who talks about Bhagwan's leela, listen to it. If you find someone eager to hear it, talk about it. If you don't find either, sing about it to yourself. Children hum cinema songs even in the bathroom. Why shold you hesitate to sing or hum bhajans, shlokas or verses about Bhagwan? Memorise the ones you like, think about them and savour them.

Pashyanti tava paadaabjam bhavaarnavasutaaranam,

tyanmaayaagunabaddhaaham vyatirikstam gunaashrayam. 6. 76

Look; to listen, talk, and hum are all sadhans of the vani. To think about and delight in Bhagwan are both in the mana.

'Ta e`va pashyanti naanye` - pashyantye`va natu na pashyanti'* – the person gets Bhagwan's darshan; it is certain that he will get Bhagwan's darshan, and he will get without delay. There is no doubt about this. *'Achire`naiva' – he will get it within a short time. Furthermore, the darshan will remove all bandhans.

The condition of people becomes very strange when they are engrossed in the sansara. They see something nice and chase it. A gentleman in Mumbai told me about a man who saw a very well-dressed lady walking on the road. He felt that she must be very beautiful and began to follow her. The lady understood that this man

is following her. She tried to evade him by going into lanes, but he persisted. She then went to her own house. At the front door she turned round and removed her sari from her face. She was so ugly that she looked positively frightening! What he saw was just to opposite of what he expected!

We should listen to Bhagwan's katha and talk about it, and find pleasure in it. This helps us to cross over the sea of the sansara.

Katham tvaam de`va jaaneeyaam stotu vaa vishayam vibhum,

namasyaami raghushre`shtham baanaasanasharaanvitam,

lakshmane`na saha bhraatraa sugreevaadibhiranvitam. 6. 77

E`vam stuto raghushre`shthah prasannah pranataadhahrit,

uvaacha yogineem bhakttaam kim te` manasi kaankshitam. 6. 78

Saa praaha raaghavam bhakttyaa bhakttim te` bhakttavatsala,

yatra kutraapi jaataayaa nishchalaam de`hi me` prabho. 6. 79

Tvadbhaktte`shu sadaa sango bhooyaanme` praakrite`shu na,

jivhaa me` raamaraame`ti bhaktyaa vadatu sarvadaa. 6. 80

Maanasam shyaamalam roopam seetaalakshmanasanyutam,

dhanurbaanadharam peetavaasasam mukutojjvalam,. 6. 81

Angadairnoopurairmuktaahaaraih kaustubhakundalaih,

bhaantam smaratu me` raama varam naanyam vrine` prabho. 6. 82

*'*Svayamprabha said, "how can I know, Dev, how Your stuti should be done? Vani does not reach You. I bow down to this roop of Yours, Rama, with a dhanush, and with Sugriva and Lakshman."

When the Yogini finished her stuti, Rama told her, "tell Me what is in your mana."'

It is not proper to tell Bhagwan, 'You understand what is in my mana, and fulfil my wish.' That means you are unwilling to bestir this little tongue of yours and tell Him what you want; you want Bhagwan to look into your hriday and do what you want. Why should Bhagwan do what you say? He is the sakshi of countless jeevas. He will listen to those who appeal to Him.

'Bhagwan told Svayamprabha to tell Him what she wanted. The Yogini answered with great prema. "He Bhakta-vatsal! Please give me unshakeable bhakti, no matter where I am born."'

To make bhakti nishchala – unmoving – is difficult even for Bhagwan. He can remain nishchal, but how can He ensure that the mano-vritti of a jeeva remains stable?

'The Yogini said, "regardless of the group I am be born in, Maharaj, please keep my mana focused totally on Your form."'

When a manushya's vritti is filled with prema for Bhagwan, inclined only towards His form, it is called bhakti. The akara of Rama is present even in Ravana's mana, but it is not with prema. A bhakta is one whose mana is lovingly inclined for Bhagwan's form. When anybody's mana is inclined for Bhagwan with dvesha, it is not bhakti. The mana keeps burning with dvesha. There is no rasa in it.

If the vritti is filled with dvesha for Bhagwan it means the person burns constantly with the fire of hatred. Then the fruit of thinking about Bhagwan is given after mrityu. In the prema-filled vritti for Bhagwan, the fruit of thinking about His is instantaneous.

'The Yogini said, "the first point is that my shareer may be that of any yoni; even the vanars have prema for You; I have no objection to being born a monkey. Or, I may become a rock on which You sit. I may be born in any form, but let me have bhakti for You, and let the vritti of my hriday remain fixed on Your akara.

The second point is that I want to sanga of Your bhaktas; I should always get Satsang. Generally, people are engrossed in talk about the sansara. I don't want their sanga; I want Satsang.

The third point is that Your naam should always be on my tongue – Rama! Rama! Rama!

And, what should be in my mana? This blue-hued form of Yours should be in my mana always.

However, You do not look so good in a state of viyog from Sitaji. I want You and Sitaji to stay together in my mana, with Lakshman beside You, and Your dhansh-baan in Your hands, wearing – not valkal, but a pitambara. I don't want a jata on Your head; I want to see Your wearing a golden crown, all ornaments, rich garments, the Kaustubha Mani, and kundal in Your ears. Let my mana always be filled with this roop.

There is no need for me to ask for anything more. Whichever yoni my shareer will be of, my mana should be filled with Bhagwan's bhakti. I should have Bhagwan's sanga. His name should be on my tongue, and my hriday should pulsate with the roop of Sita-Rama-Lakshman's roop, filled with anand!"

Shreeraama uvaacha

Bhavatve`vam mahaabhaage` gachchha tvam badareevanam,

tatraiva maam smarantee tvam tyaktve`dam bhootapanchakam,

maame`va paramaatmaanamachiraaprtipadyase`. 6. 83

Shrutvaa raghoottamavachoamritasaarakalpam gatvaa tadaiva badareetarukhandajushtam,

teertham tadaa raghupatim manasaa smarantee tyaktvaa kale`varamavaapa param padam saa. 6. 84

Shree Ramji said, “O blessed lady, so be it. Go to the Badri van and do My smaran. Let go of this shareer of yours, made of the pancha bhoota; you will obtain Me.”

The Yogini went to the Badri van and obtained the Param-pada doing dhyana.

Kishkindha Kanda

The Seventh Sarga.

Meeting Sampati

Shreemahaade`va uvaacha

Atha tatra samaaseenaa vrikshakhande`shu vaanaraah,

chintayanto vimuhyantah seetaamaargakarshitaah. 7. 1

Tatrovaachaangadah kaanshchidvaanaraan vaanarshabhah,

bhramataam gavhare`asmaakam maaso noonam gatoabhavat. 7. 2

Seetaa naadhigataasmaabhirna kritam raajashaasanam,

yadi gachchhaamah kishkindhaam sugreevoasmaan hanishati. 7. 3

Vishe`shatah shatrusutam maam mishaannihanishyati,

mayi tasya kutah preetiraham raame`na rakshitah. 7.4

Idaaneem raamakaaryam me` na kritam tanmisham bhave`t,

tasya maddhanane` noonam sugreevasya duraatmanah. 7. 5

'The vanars were sitting in a copse of trees, beside the sea. They were depressed because they had not found Sitaji. Angadji called the vanars he was close.'

A manushya's mana becomes disheartened at times. When this happens you should not think it is state that will endure.

'Angadji's mana became dejected. He said, "one month is over. We have not succeeded in finding Sitaji. We have not obeyed Raja Sugriva's aagna to return within a month. If we go back now he will surely kill us. I am the son of his enemy, Bali; he just needs an excuse to kill me. This is a very good excuse to kill me – Rama's work was not done. Sugriv's heart is not good."

Angadji maligned Sugriva.

Maatrikalpaam bhraatribhaaryaam paapaatmaanubhavatyasau,

na gachchhe`yamatah paarshvam tasya vaanarapungavaah. 7. 6

Tyakshyaami jeevitam chaatra ye`na ke`naapi mrityunaa,

ityashrunayana ke`chid drishtvaa vaanarapungavaah. 7. 7

Vyathitaah saashrunayanaa yuvaraajamathaabruvan. 7. 8

Kimartham tava shokoatra vayam te` praanarakshakaah,

bhavaamo nivasaamoatra guhaayaam bhayavarjitaah. 7. 9

"A brother's patni is like a mother, but Sugriva keeps his brother's patni as his own," said Angadji. "I won't go back to Kishkindha. I will die sitting here, no matter what kind of mrityu I get." Tears flowed from his eyes. The vanars felt distressed. They told him, "Angadji, please don't grieve. All of us will protect your prana; just stay in this gufa."'

Even the staunchest of friends sometimes get the wrong kind of thoughts, but it would not be proper to consider them to be enemies because of this. It is the svabhava of the mana to go astray at times. We should accept this as a natural tendency of the mana.

Sarvasaubhaagyasahitam puram de`vapuropamam,

shanaih parasparam vaakyam vadataam maarutaatmajah. 7. 10

Shrutvaangadam samaalingya provaacha nayankovidah,

vichaaryate` kimarthtam te` durvichaaro na yujyate`. 7. 11

Raagnoatyantapriyastvam hi taaraaputroativallabhah,

raamasya lakshmanaatpreetistvayi nityam pravardhate`. 7. 12

Ato na raaghavaadbheetistava raagno vishe`shatah,

aham tava hite` saktto vatsa naanyam vichaaraya. 7. 13

Guhaavaasashcha nirbhe`dya ityukttam vaanaraistu yat,

tade`tadraamabaanaanaamabhe`dyam kim jagattraye`. 7. 14

Ye` tvaam durbodhayantye`te` vaanaraa vaanararshabha,

putradaaraadikam tyakttvaa katham sthaasyanti te` tvayaa. 7. 15

'Hanumanji saw that matters were going on the wrong track. Hanumanji knows the secrets of a manushya's nature. He embraced Angad. Hanumanji is skilled in vyavhar. He told Angad, "look Angadji, the thoughts that are coming to you are not good thoughts. There is no cause for you to think this way. Sugriva has great prema for you. Your thinking, that he considers you to be the putra of his dushman is an erroneous bias. Sugriva has great prema for your mother, Tara. Don't forget that! Would Sugriva get Tara if he killed you? No! Sugriva is bound to you.

And if you talk about Shri Rama's prema – well! Rama loves you even more than He loves Lakshman!"'

See Hanumanji's skilful way of convincing Angadji. We should learn from him how to talk to get Rama's work done.

'"Doesn't Rama have prema for you?" asked Hanumanji. "Rama's prema for you increases day by day! You should have no fear of Raja Rama. And, when Raja Rama has so much prema for you, you have nothing to fear from Sugriva either!

I am your well-wisher; you are like my putra. Don't harbour negative thoughts in your mana. Those who have advised you to stay in the gufa, assuring you of their protection, are fools! There is nothing Ramachandra's baan can't pierce! The advice given by these vanars is wrong. Think for yourself – how long will these vanars who are inciting you stay away from their putras and patnis? For how long will they protect you?"'

People who incite others generally do not maintain their support for long; they bring others to the fore and fade away.

Anyadguhyatamam vakshye` rahasyam shrunu me` suta,

raamona maanusho de`vah sakshaannaaraayanoavyayah. 7. 16

Seetaa bhagavatee maayaa janasammohakaarinee,

lakshmano bhuvanaadhaarah sakshaachchhe`shah faneeshvarah. 7. 17

Brahmanaa praarthtaah sarve` rakshoganavinaashane`,

maayaamaanushabhaave`na jaataa lokaikarakshakaah. 7. 18

Vayam cha paarshadaah sarve` vishnorvaikunthavaasinah,

manushyabhaavamaapanne` sve`chchhayaa paramaatmani. 7. 19

Vayam vaanararoope`na jaataastasyaiva maayayaa,

vayam tu tapasaa poorvamaaraadhya jagataam patim. 7. 20

Te`naivaanugriheetaah smah paarshadatvamupaagataah,

idaaneemapi tasyaiva se`vaam kritvaiva maayayaa. 7. 21

'Hanumanji told Angadji, "There is a secret that people don't know about. Rama is not a manushya; He is the avyaya sakshat Narayana! Sita is not a stree; she is Bhagwati Maya, come to delude people. Lakshman is sakshat Shesha Bhagwan on whose head the world rests. These three are the protectors of the three lokas. They have come as manushyas to destroy the Rakshasas, at Brahmaji's prarthana.

Angad! They have come as manushyas, and we have come to do their seva. We are not born because of karma-bandhan as other beings are; it is Bhagwan's Maya that when He chooses to assume a manushya shereer, we also come as manushyas. In the past we have done tapasya as our aradhana of the Master of the world, and He showered Grace on us. We are His servants and we have come to do His seva and then go back to Vaikuntha."

Hanumanji comforted Angad with these words.

Punarvaikunthamaasaadya sukham sthaasyaamahe` vayam,

ityangadamathaashvaasya gataa vindhyam mahaachalam. 7. 22

Vichinvantoatha shanakairjaanakeem dakshinaambudhe`h,

teere` mahe`ndraakhyagire`h pavitram paadamaayayuh. 7. 23

Drishtvaa samudram dushpaaramagaadham bhayavardhanam,

vaanaraa bhayasantrastaah kim kurma iti vaadinah. 7. 24

Nishe`durudadhe`steere` sarve` chintaasamanvitaah,

mantrayaamaasuranyonyamangadaadyaa mahaabalaah. 7. 25

Bhramato me` vane` maaso gatoatraiva guhaantare`,

na drasho raavano vaadya seetaa vaa janakaatmajaa. 7. 26

Sugreevasteekshnadandoasmaannihantye`va na sanshayah,

sugreevavadhatoasmaakam shre`yah praayopave`shanam. 7. 27

Iti nishchitya tatraiva darbhaanaasteerya sarvatah,

upavivishuste` sarve` marane` kritanishchayaah. 7. 28

The vanars proceeded further south from Vindhyachal and reached the sea, beside the Vindhyachal Parvat – now called the Rajmahendra – and the Godavari River. The sight of the vast samudra with its huge waves frightened the vanars. They didn't know what to do. They sat down to discuss the matter.

"We have found neither Ravana nor Sita, and the time limit of one month is over. Rather than face Sugriva's harsh punishment, it is better for us to starve in this place," they decided.'

The Kamandakiya Neeti says that there should be no laxity in meting out punishment to those who break the law else, nobody will respect the law. The Ishwara's constitution of eternal right behaviour is beyond the laws made by manushyas – *nashye`t trathee dandaneetau hataayaam.*

‘The vanars decided that they would not go back to Kishkindha. They would stay here and starve to death. They sat on the grass with this resolve.

E`tasminnnantare` tatra mahe`ndraadriguhaantaraat,

nirgatya shanakairaagaadgriddhah parvatasannibhah. 7. 29

Drishtvaa praayopave`she`na sthitaanvaanarapungavaan,

uvaacha shanakairgriddhrah praapto bhakshyoadya me` bahuh. 7. 30

E`kaikashah kramaatsarvaan bhakshayaami dine` dine`,

shrutvaa tadgridhravachanam vaanaraa bheetamaanasaah. 7. 31

Bhakshayishyati na sarvaansau gridhro na sanshayah,

raamakaaryam cha naasmaabhih kritam kinchiddhareeshvaraah. 7. 32

Sugreevasyaapi cha hitam na kritam svaatmanaamapi,

vrithaane`na vadham praaptaa gachchhaamo yamasaadanam. 7. 33

Aho jataayurdharmaatmaa raamasyaarthe` mritah sudheeh,

moksham praapa duraavaapam yoginaamapyarindamah. 7. 34

Sampaatistu tadaa vaakyam shrutvaa vaanarabhaashitam,

ke` vaa yooyam mama bhraatuh karnapeeyooshasannibham. 7. 35

Jataayuriti naamaadya vyaaharantah parasparam,

uchyataam vo bhayam maabhoonmattah plavagasattamaah. 7. 36

A gigantic vulture emerged from the mouth of the gufa of the Mahendra Parvat. He saw the vanars sitting there in a fast unto death. “This is excellent!” said the vulture. “Now, I won’t have to worry about my food for the next few days. I will eat one vanar every day.”

The vanars heard this and felt terrified.’

You may have heard about the man who sat down on the railway track to commit suicide. A passerby asked him why he was sitting there. He explained that he was waiting for a train to come and run him over because he wanted to be killed. 'What do you have in that bundle?' asked the passerby. 'I have some food in it, to eat in case the train is late. I don't want to die hungry.'

'These vanars were prepared to fast unto death but they did not want to be eaten by this huge griddhra. They began to lament, "neither was Rama's work done, nor could we benefit Sugriva; and now, this giddha will devour us! Just see – there was that other griddhra, Jatayu. He was a great Dharmatma. He gave up his prana for Rama, and obtained Moksha!"

When the griddhra Sampati heard this, he said, "what? Who are you people? Why are you taking the name of my brother? The name of my brother is like amrita to my ears. Just utter it again – Jatayu! Jatayu! Tell me about Jatayu; you have nothing to fear from me now. I will not eat any of you."

Tamuvaachaangadag shreemaanutthito gridhrasannidhau,

raamo daasharathih shreemaan lakshmane`na samanvitah. 7. 37

Seetayaa bhaaryayaa saardham vichachaara mahaavane`,

tasya seetaa hritaa saadhvee raavane`na duraatmanaa. 7. 38

Mrigayaam nirgate` raame` lakshmane` cha hritaa balaat,

raamaraame`ti kroshantee shrutvaa gridhrah prataapavaan. 7. 39

Sa jataayurnaama paksheendro yuddham kritvaa sudaarunam,

raavane`na hato veero raaghavaartham mahaabalah. 7. 40

Raame`na dagdho raamasya saayujyamagamatkshanaat,

raamah sugreevamaasaadya sakhyam kritvaagnisaakshikam, 7. 41

Sugreevachodito hatvaa vaalinam suduraasadam,